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THE SWEETEST SONG.

Through all the season's gloom, o'er drifting snows,
'Mid whistling winds and winter's chilling cold,
Loud with the voice of love to ease earth's woes,
The shepherd's song sounds sweetly as of old.

He in the manger's straw—the wretched stall,
First taught the lesson of true Mercy's sway;
And no soul is so poor, or lost to all,
That may not feel Him born again to-day.

Upon the sky that overhangs our ways,
The Christmas star is shining bright as then,
To light the inner heart with Heaven's rays—
A monitor of peace, good will to men.

So 'mid the myrrh of kindly, friendly deed,
So in the frankincense of smile and word,
Goes up to Him—Salvation's holy meed—
The sweetest song e'en angels ever heard.

A GOLDEN PRIZE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "BY CROOKED PATHS," "SHEATHED IN VELVET," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

CLIFFORD let his hand touch Nellie's sleeve encouragingly.

"We had a little misunderstanding," he answered drily. "No, we'll let bygones be bygones, Mr. Wood. The doctor will, I am sure, keep his own counsel. Vyse is miles away by this time! Why, how long is it ago?"

"Three weeks," said Mr. Wood.

"Three weeks!" murmured Clifford, with a faint look of uneasiness. "So long! Well, by this time he is, if he is a sensible man, half-way across the ocean. It is the best thing he could have done, and what I advised him; the pity of it is that he didn't take my advice without caving in my head. But I've quite made up my mind. Nothing will persuade me to prosecute him—or anybody else," he added, almost to himself, as he thought of that other, the old major, who had twice wronged him.

Old Wood went out grumbling, with the doctor, and Nellie was left to her solitary watch.

Clifford was silent for some little time, for the argument and the talking had tired him, then he said:

"Give me your hand, Nellie. I want to hold it while I tell you—but, ah, no, I can't tell you how full of gratitude my heart is for all you have done for me!"

She slid her hand slowly and shyly into his, and sat with downcast face, her heart beating like an imprisoned bird in her breast.

"You thought, perhaps, that I did not know half the time I have been lying here like a log, who it was that watched over me night and day, but I knew it, even when I was at my worst, and I tried, Nellie, to get strength and tell you; and now I'm strong enough, I can't find words; words are such poor things. But, Nellie, this I know, that no man was ever nursed as you have nursed me, even by his own sister."

She looked up swiftly, and a pang seemed to shoot through her heart.

"No man ever had a sweeter, dearer, more loving-hearted sister than you have been to me, Nellie, and if I live to be a hundred, I shall never forget it!"

There was silence. She said not a word, and he could not see her face, which had grown whiter and whiter, after he had called her his sister.

Then he spoke again.

"It was a lucky and a happy day for me, that day I came down into the quarry, Nellie. Do you know, that if it had not been for your father's kindness and generosity, I should have been an outcast, wandering about America or Australia in the old wretched fashion. I should never have known you, Nellie, and what it was to have a dear little sister; and then I should never have made this discovery which has altered my life. You want to know what that is, little one?" he said, with a smile and a pressure of the hand; "and I'm longing to tell you. But not yet, Nellie; not yet! A day or two—when I get a little stronger, directly I can get about—you shall know all. You will understand then what I mean when I say that the day I came into the quarry was the turning point in my life."

He had spoken with some excitement, and his face had grown flushed. She noticed it at once, and bent over him.

"You shall tell me all about it, Mr. Raven," she said soothingly; "but don't talk any more now! It is time you went to sleep for a little while——"

He laughed, his eyes flashing with the brightness of the last remnants of his fever.

"You think I am still wandering in my mind, I see, Nellie," he said. "But I'm as sensible as a sane man can possibly be, and I've a very serious meaning to my words. But there, I won't repay your sweet goodness by disobedience the moment I'm well enough to disobey; I'll take my nap, but only on one condition."

"And that is?" she said.

"That you will go out and get a little run in the fresh air. You need not mind leaving me, Nellie; I am quite well and strong now, you know. Come, go, there's a good girl? Why, who's to nurse you if you are ill?"

She straightened the pillow and the counterpane, and he took her hand as it passed him, and raised it to his lips.

"Thank you, thank you a thousand times, dear Nellie! my little sister!" he said.

She did not snatch her hand away, but drew it from his slowly, and, with lowered head, passed out.

When the door had closed behind her, she stood with her hand pressed to her heart, a dazed, benumbed look on her face; then, with an uncertain step, she made her way to the path, and slowly climbing it, dropped on to the grass and hid her face in her hands, while her lips murmured in a kind of sob:

"His sister! Only his sister! That is all, that is all!"

Five minutes after she had left the cottage, a gentleman came from the cliffs on the other side of the quarry, and stood looking down into it.

He wore a long ulster, and had turned up the collar, which almost concealed his face. It was Arthur Carr-Lyon, and he had come to see for himself what this Clifford Raven was like, who had robbed him of Kate Meddon's love, and against whom the anonymous note had warned him.

For a few minutes he stood behind a shelf of rock which sheltered him from observation, looking round with a stealthy glance, as if he were bent on some murderous errand; then, seeing that no one was about, he descended the path, keeping as much under the shadow of the overhanging rock as he could, and made his way to the cottage.

Even then he paused, and with pale face and stealthy glances, stood listening for a moment or two. Then he knocked, and, getting no answer, softly opened the door and looked in.

The comfortable aspect of the room seemed to surprise him, and he stood looking round curiously and suspiciously, and waiting for someone to come.

But as no one appeared, he knocked at the inner door, and, again getting no answer, turned the handle and went in.

Nellie had drawn down the blind, and the room was partly dark, so that though he could see the face of the sick man, he could not distinguish his features.

He went up to the bed, walking on tiptoe, and looked down at Clifford.

"Curse him!" he muttered. "He looks a gentleman," and his hands clenched as his face grew red with jealous hatred. "Who is he and what is he, and what's he playing a part here for? She meets him I suppose—curse him, I—I could wring his neck as he lies here!" and his hands twitched.

Almost as if the hoarsely-muttered words and the threatening gesture had been heard and seen by him, the sleeping man slowly turned his head and murmured something.

Arthur Carr-Lyon started and bit his lip, for it seemed to him that the sleeping man had spoken his, Carr-Lyon's name.

"Tut, what a fool I am!" he exclaimed, under his breath. "I'm as—as nervous as a cat! And what about? If anyone came in and he should wake, I can say I have heard he was ill, and called to inquire. I'd better stay here and see it out," and he sank into a chair, and sat staring evilly at the white, handsome face.

"So that's the fellow she's sweet on, is it?" he muttered savagely. "Some infernal rogue who's done something or other, and is lying in hiding here, pretending to be a quarryman. A quarryman with hands like those! I wish to Heaven I knew what he had been doing, and all about him! I'd like to lead him a quod; I'd like to see her face when she heard the truth about him. He looks bad, weak and bad! How long is he going to lie there asleep, I wonder? So that is her Mr. Clifford Raven! Curse him, curse him!"

Then suddenly, while his lips were forming maledictions on this unknown man who had stepped between him and Kate, Clifford lowered his head, and seeming to look at him, though in reality he looked beyond him into vacancy, said, in a low, but perfectly distinct voice:

"I am Desmond Carr-Lyon, the Earl of Carr-Lyon; I can prove it!"

Arthur Carr-Lyon sat perfectly motionless for a moment, then he gazed wildly at the white face, and sprang to his feet like a man who doubts his own senses.

For a moment or two he stood there, his eyes glaring down at the unconscious man, then he sprang, on tiptoe, across the room, tore down the curtain, and, springing back to the bed, bent down and scrutinized Clifford's face.

"By Heaven!" he exclaimed, shrinking back, "it is Desmond!"

Then he sank into the chair, and sat holding his head with his hands, and still glaring at the white, wasted face.

"It's—it's Desmond! I know him! Yes, it's Desmond! And—and he is the earl! Then what am I? Why, I'm—nothing! Desmond come to life again, and—and I'm kicked out!"

He repeated this a dozen times at least, until the words had lost their meaning for him; then he got up and bent over the bed again.

"Yes, it's Desmond!" he said hoarsely. "And I'm not drunk or dreaming. Desmond! What shall I do? What shall I do?"

His brain whirled; the room seemed spinning round him, and to his fancy the sleeping man's placid face was grinning and mocking at him.

Stifling a cry, he staggered out of the room into the air, and leaning against the door-post, tried to control his whirling brain.

"It's Desmond—my Cousin Desmond—the rightful heir, inside there," he told himself with dogged persistence. "He isn't dead, as that old hound, the major, swore. Does he know it?—does Desmond himself know it? If so, why hasn't he come forward and claimed the title? Why hasn't he, why hasn't he?" and he glared round suspiciously. "Who's at the bottom of this, and what are they playing at? What's the major's game? What's Kate's? Does she know that Desmond's alive, and I'm—I'm nobody and nothing? No she doesn't know it; the major doesn't know it, or he wouldn't have sold her to me, and she wouldn't have accepted me. It's for money and the title she's marrying me. That's it! I've known that all along!"

Then suddenly, as he repeated this to himself with savage self-torture, an idea struck him. He was a fool, but he was cunning, when he was sober.

"She was going to marry me for my money and my title—and she shall marry me!"

There was something so gratifying to his malicious jealous mind in the idea of entrapping those who had sought to entrap him, that he even laughed, a hoarse, mirthless laugh.

Then he went back to the bed-room and looked at Clifford still asleep.

"Why didn't that fool kill him outright?" he muttered. "He looks weak and bad and as if it wouldn't take much to kill him even now," and he glanced round the room. "I could strangle him—easily," he hissed, and his fingers twitched spasmodically.

But Arthur Carr-Lyon was too great a coward for such a decisive action, and after glowering down at the man whose title and money he had usurped, he left the bedside and the cottage.

When he arrived at Lydcote, everybody seemed in a state of bustle and confusion; and he went straight to his room and, locking the door, threw himself into a chair.

His valet had been packing, and on the clothes-rail in the dressing-room Arthur Carr-Lyon could see the regulation wedding suit put out ready for the morrow.

"Only a few hours!" he muttered feverishly. "Only a few hours now! He can't leave the cottage; I'll take care no letter reaches her. No! do what you like after, Cousin Desmond, but I'll marry Kate Meddon to-morrow!"

This was the only thing he could get to stand out clear in his mind; all the rest was confused and hazy.

Only let him succeed in making Kate his wife and the rest might go. Perhaps he might stick to the title and the money yet.

He might go to law with Desmond, dispute his claim, and perhaps win the case. Possession was the great thing, and after all, Desmond might have considerable difficulty in proving that he was the earl—that he was himself.

"I'll fight it inch by inch to the bitter end," he muttered. "I won't give it up until everything has been tried. And then—then I shall have sold the major and that proud daughter of his! At any rate, I shall have had my revenge."

He rang the bell, and told a servant to bring him some some brandy, but when it came, and he was about to help himself, he stopped, and pushed it away from him.

"No, I won't drink to-night! I've got to keep my head clear or they'll best me yet! I won't touch a drop until after the wedding!"

The day closed, and the morrow broke clear and bright, and the sun streamed through the window upon Kate, as she stood before the glass in her white satin bridal gown.

Ann was on her knees beside her arranging the gauzy folds of the lace veil, and Lady Warner, in the mauve silk which ladies of her age always wear on such occasions, surveyed the operation at a few

yards' distance.

"Draw it a little more forward, Ann," she said; "that is it! That will do nicely! Really, Kate, you do look very well; but white always did suit you! I've seen some girls look as yellow as an orange under their veils, but though you are naturally pale, you stand the dead white very well. By the way, child, did you eat any breakfast this morning?"

"Did I eat? I forget!" said Kate, and she raised her eyes for a moment, then dropped them, and stood motionless as a statue, and with apparently only a statue's interest in the proceedings.

"Well, I don't wonder," said Lady Warner. "I am sure I could not have told on my wedding-day whether I stood on my head or my heels; one goes through it all in a kind of dream. I was so nervous, I remember, that I could have screamed when they sent up to say that the carriage was waiting. Do you feel like that?"

Kate raised her eyes again.

"No," she said slowly, in the same dull, mechanical fashion; "I don't feel nervous, and I do not think I shall scream."

"No, I don't think you will, my dear," said the old lady. "You have admirable self-possession, and are the last person in the world to make scenes. I doubt very much whether you will cry."

"No, I don't think I shall even cry," said Kate quietly.

Someone knocked at the door, and Ann opened it and found Jane with a beautiful bouquet.

"With Lord Carr-Lyon's love to Miss Kate," said Jane.

"Oh, how magnificent!" exclaimed Lady Warner. "Look, Kate! I never saw anything handsomer. It must have come from London by the night mail!" and she held it out for Kate's inspection.

Kate took it and looked at it perfectly unmoved, though such flowers were beautiful enough to have roused her to enthusiasm—some months ago.

"Yes, it is very beautiful," she said quietly.

"See what it is to have a rich earl for a bridegroom," said Lady Warner, with a little laugh; "only earls can afford a bouquet of such orchids as these! If you were going to marry a poor man, Kate, you would have to put up with Christmas roses and camelias, such as I had; but only orchids are good enough for the future Countess of Carr-Lyon! Well, nothing is too good for my Kate!" and she took her hand and drew her towards her. "Why, Kate, how very cold you are!" she exclaimed, aghast at the touch of her little white hand, which seemed like snow. "Do go to the fire and warm yourself. Stoop down and hold your hands near it. Are you like that all over?"

"I suppose so," said Kate, as she stared absently into the fire. "It is a cold day, isn't it?"

"It isn't warm outside, but it's warm enough in this room here," said Lady Warner. "Will you have a glass of wine to——"

Kate shook her head.

"No, thanks," she said indifferently; "I didn't know that I was so cold, so that it does not matter."

Lady Warner signed to Ann, and the girl went down and got some wine, and the old lady made Kate drink some.

"You don't want to freeze the bridegroom, my dear," she said, with a laugh.

Then there came the sound of footsteps on the stairs, and the two bridesmaids were permitted to enter.

They were two nieces of Lady Warner, just fresh from school, and they started a duet of ecstatic admiration immediately.

"Oh, Miss Meddon; oh, Kate, you look simply lovely! Doesn't she, aunt? Ever so much prettier than Miss Brabazon, and everybody said she was the loveliest bride that had ever been seen! And that veil—oh, it is too beautiful, too lovely! And what exquisite flowers! and look, Lord Carr-Lyon has given us a bouquet each, and diamond pendants—see, Kate! Oh, auntie, don't you think she is a lucky girl to make such a match?"

Lady Warner simply nodded; but something in their girlish enthusiasm roused Kate for a moment, and she looked from one to the other with a strange smile that they remembered years after.

"So you think I am lucky do you?" she said, her sweet low voice sounding very measured and cold.

"Of course we do, and so does everybody else! Why, you should have heard the bishop—you know he had come?—he told the major that the Carr-Lyon earldom is one of the oldest in the kingdom, and that you had made as good a match as if you had had a couple of seasons in London."

Kate turned her head away, and raised the bouquet to her face to hide the spasm which passed over it; then she shuddered and held the flowers away from her.

"What is it, Kate?" the three asked in chorus.

"Nothing, nothing," she faltered. "I never did care much for the smell of orchids."

"And you are ready now?" said Lady Warner, looking at her watch. "I think it is time we got down-stairs if the bishop is here. It will not do to keep him waiting, to say nothing of poor Lord Carr-Lyon."

One of the girls giggled.

"Poor Lord Carr-Lyon, he is so impatient. Do you know, Kate, dear," she whispered mischievously, "that he has sent twice within the last half-hour to hear if you were nearly ready, and we told him—at least my sister Madge did—that you had scarcely began to dress. Isn't it nice of him to be so eager? I hope my bridegroom will be the same when I get one. But I shall have to put up with a curate or a captain in a line regiment, sha'n't I, aunt?" and she laughed brightly.

Kate's face grew red. Their lightheartedness struck discordantly on her strained and tortured mind.

"I hope you will be very happy, Lucy, whomsoever you may marry."

"Thank you, dear, and I hope I will look half as sweet as you do to-day when my turn comes, oh, what a lot of people there are outside the gates. And the carriage has come, aunt! Mightn't we go down?"

Kate moved towards the door and then she stopped.

"Give—give me some more wine please," she said.

"Kate, are you ill?" cried one of the girls, for her pale face had grown white as the driven snow. "Oh, you are not going to faint, are you?"

"No," said Kate when she had drank the wine; "no, Lucy, I'm not going to faint—why should I? But, you see, for all my bragging, I am a little nervous."

The two girls looked at each other, and the youngest, as they followed down the stairs, whispered to her aunt:

"I think she feels it more than we think, aunt. Kate isn't so cool and matter-of-fact as people consider her to be!"

The little drawing-room was crowded with people, and in their midst were the major, and his distant relative, the bishop,—the former red, and shining with satisfaction the latter bland and complacent, and with the air of continual benediction.

A hush fell upon the group as Kate entered, and the major came bustling up and took her hand.

"This is my daughter Kate, bishop;" he said, and the complacent ecclesiastic shook the cold hand, and murmured a few appropriate words.

"I am very glad to see you, my dear, and rejoiced that we such a joyful occasion. You're mother and I were great friends, and I can understand my cousin, the major's pride in the possession of so great a treasure."

Then in an undertone he said to the major—

"She is very beautiful! I can comprehend the whole matter now. She could have married as high as she pleased. I hope this young Lord Carr-Lyon is worthy of her."

"Oh, a most excellent young fellow, bishop," said the major, solemnly, "a most steady and—er—high-principled young man."

"Ah, indeed! I have not had the pleasure of making his acquaintance," said the bishop, blandly. "I remember the late earl, who must have been his uncle."

"His uncle—er—precisely," said the major. "Won't you take a glass of wine, bishop, before you start? I can recommend this Madeira—you used to be partial to Madeira if I remember rightly."

"Only half a glass, please," said the bishop. "Yes, I knew the uncle, and this young fellow, of course, Desmond Carr-Lyon."

The major's face grew red, then pale.

"No, no," he said, speaking in a low voice, and glancing round apprehensively. "No, this is not Desmond, but Arthur."

"Arthur? Dear me: what tricks one's memory plays with one," said the bishop. "Let me see, the uncle died, and the next two boys were drowned yachting, and then came Desmond! Surely——"

"He—he died out in America—Nevada," explained the major, the perspiration starting out on his forehead. "You will have another glass? "It's very decent wine; some I bought at a sale——"

"Only half a glass more, my dear major! So Desmond died too, did he? How strange! He was a nice boy, was Desmond! I remember him quite well. A nice frank, manly boy!"

"Yes, yes; so I have heard," the major said hurriedly. "But I think you'll like the present earl; he is—er—a very nice young fellow."

"Just so, and a very lucky one!" said the bishop, with a nod and a smile. "And so young Desmond died too, did he? What an unfortunate race the Carr-Lyons have been!"

"Yes, yes, they have," said the major; "and now, don't you think we had better start for the church?"

"I'm quite ready," the bishop assented blandly.

The major gave Kate his arm, and led her to the carriage, and the rest following suit, the cavalcade started.

As Lucy, the bridesmaid, had said, there was a crowd outside, and they set up a cheer as she came out, looking like a beauteous statue, in her white bridal dress, with her white face gleaming through the costly veil.

There was another crowd at the church, and Kate on her father's arm passed up a lane made by the eager and curious sightseers.

They were not only eager and curious, but kindly and affectionate, for more than once she heard a voice murmur. "Heaven bless you, Miss Kate!"

The church was crammed, and the vestry itself seemed so full that there were scarcely room for the bishop to put on his surplice.

Meanwhile the bridegroom had been wearing his heart out impatiently.

From an early hour of the auspicious morning he had paced up and down his room devoured by mingled eagerness and dread; eagerness to call Kate his own, his wife, and dread, lest by some miracle Desmond should recover his strength, and present himself even at the altar to stop the ceremony.

Slowly the hours seemed to drag their long length along, and he became like a wounded bear to every one who approached him.

Once his valet was on the point of giving him notice, and one of the maids whom he happened to meet on the stairs fled to the servants' hall in tears, called forth by the flood of oaths with which he greeted her.

But the longest hour dwindles away if one will but wait for it, and after what seemed to be ages, they came and told him that the bride had started.

Then, and not till then, he tossed off a glassful of brandy, and permitted his valet to put the finishing touches to his toilet.

"There's—there's a lot of people there, I suppose he inquired of the patient valet.

"Yes, my lord, a good many people—hundreds, I should say."

"What sort of people?" he demanded.

"Oh! all sorts, my lord; all the gentry—they're in the church, most of them, and the servants."

"Are there any of those cursed quarrymen?" he asked with affected indifference.

"I don't know, my lord, but I should think so, there seems all sorts of people there."

"Did you see any of them give Miss Kate a letter?"

"No, my lord. A letter?—certainly not. I did not see——"

"And you wouldn't have seen if they had," snarled his lordship. "You're a fool! Be quick. Confound you, do you think I'm going to sit here all day while you chatter like a monkey? Give me a little more brandy."

The valet shrugged his shoulders and went on with his work, and presently Arthur, the Earl of Carr-Lyon, was ready, and accompanied by a distant relative, a young cavalry officer, who had been hunted up to play the part of best man, entered the carriage.

"Keep your spirits up, Arthur," said the young fellow, eyeing him critically. "There is nothing to be afraid of."

"Who's afraid?" snarled the earl.

"Oh, all right," responded the lad, adding to himself, "the beggar has been drinking."

They reached the church porch, and the bridegroom made his way through the crowd to the door, amidst a profound silence.

"Looks terrible anxious, don't he?" remarked an old laborer, as the earl and his best man passed into the church. "But, lawks, it's a trying time, lads; ain't it?"

Arthur Carr-Lyon seemed to find it a very trying time, for as he entered the vestry his countenance was that of a man who was running a race for life or death; and the major as he came forward found an opportunity to whisper:

"All right, my dear boy; keep up your spirits!"

Then he introduced him to the bishop, who shook hands and smiled a benediction upon him, and the bride, leaning upon her father's arm and followed by her bridesmaids, moved up to the altar.

It was a strange thing, but at the moment, as the organ pealed out the first part of the marriage service, Kate's spirit took flight, and leaving Sandford church, went back to the dusky lane where she had first met Clifford Raven: and his handsome face, pale and wan, with fatigue and hunger, rose before her.

She saw him, too, as he had stood beneath her on the terrace on the night of the ball, and the organ seemed to be setting to music the passionate words that his lips had uttered.

His voice seemed to rise and fill the church, crying:

"Kate, I love you, I love you! Trust to me, Kate! I love you! Only wait and listen to me!"

But she put the vision away from her, and walked up to the altar with a firm unwavering step, and not one of the hundreds of spectators ever guessed what was passing in the mind of the bride, whose beauty filled men with admiration and women with envy.

At the altar the bishop stood in his lawn sleeves, and in his deep and solemn voice he read the service.

"Will you, Arthur, have this woman, Kate, to be your wife?"

What a solemn service it is! How many a life has been made or wrecked by it!

Blandly and smoothly the major spoke his part; and hoarsely but firmly Arthur Carr-Lyon went through his.

Kate's was scarcely audible, but the bishop was supposed to catch her responses, and in a few minutes the knot was tied and Kate Meddon and Arthur Carr-Lyon were man and wife.

Man and wife!

As the last words were uttered, those who were standing near the altar rails saw the bride shudder and droop her head, and noticed the bridegroom's face grow red and his eyes flash; but the next moment a rush was made to the vestry to sign the register, and bride and bridegroom were forgotten.

White and statuesque Kate signed her maiden name for the last time, and the bridegroom, taking up the pen, signed his, but his hand shook, and his name was a mere scrawl.

Then the usual crowd, which is always to the front at fashionable weddings wrote their names, and the bridegroom made their way to their carriage through a line of children who strewed flowers in their path.

"Thank Heaven, that's over, eh, Kate?" said the bridegroom. "What a confounded fuss, isn't it.

Kate, white and cold, shrank back in her corner, and said nothing, and in a few moments the carriage stopped at the major's villa.

As many people as—and more than—the place would hold had been asked, and the major in his blue coat and white waistcoat received them and did the honors.

One wedding breakfast is very much like another.

There is the same stony chicken and stringy ham, the usual soul freezing pastry and mock turtle soup; and as it is at most weddings, so it was at Kate's; and the guests foraged amongst the cold viands and drank the stock champagne with the ordinary recklessness.

And equally of course the usual speeches were made; the bishop blandly enlarging on the happiness of married state, and the major in his very best vein, replying to the toast of the parent.

None of those who sat and listened to him but would have given him a testimonial on the spot for fatherly affection and disinterestedness,—none excepting, perhaps, the bridegroom, who drank deeply of the cheap champagne, and who smiled behind his table-napkin at the major's most florid and touching sentiments.

And Kate? She sat through it all with the patience and stolidity of a statue.

Never once did her face lose its set, mechanical expression, and the spectators marvelled at the wonderful self-possession which enabled her to listen unmoved to the major's glowing and elegant periods.

The bridegroom had stammered out a few words of thanks for the bride, the best man had made the usual attempt at a funny speech and then a move was begun.

Lady Warner and the bride left the table, and followed by the bridesmaids, went to change Kate's white dress for the traveling one.

The major got up and touched Carr-Lyon on the shoulder.

"A few words with you before you go, dear boy," he said, and his lordship rose and followed him into the little study.

"Well," he said sullenly, "what is it?"

"Just to wish you every happiness, my dear Arthur," said the major laying his hand on his shoulder, and beaming at him with rather unsteady eyes. "Couldn't do it before all those people, you know! May Heaven bless you, my dear boy; and my dear Kate, too! You will take care of her, Arthur? Yes, I am sure you will take care of her," and he wiped away an imaginary tear. "Nobody knows what a comfort and treasure that dear girl has been to me; no one!"

"I dessay," said the bridegroom with an impatient sneer. "But you haven't brought me in here to tell me that, have you? What is it?"

"Well, my dear boy," said the major, with a little apologetic laugh; "there was a matter of business between us, you know! Perhaps it is scarcely the time, and yet I have no doubt you would like to get it settled and done with. Have you—did you happen to remember to—ahem!—put that check in your pocket, my dear Arthur?"

"The check for the money I promised you the day I married Kate? No, I have not!"

The major's face reddened; he had been drinking far too much of the cheap champagne.

"But don't excite yourself," Carr-Lyon went on. "I'll keep my word. Look here, you had better run up to London to-morrow or the day after, and I'll give it to you there."

"Very well," said the major, but he looked bitterly disappointed.

Then the bridegroom went out and put on his overcoat, and stood in the little hall impatiently waiting for the bride.

She came down presently; the carriage drew up at the door, the guests pressed forward with the regulation rice and slippers, and in her last look at the house Kate saw the figure of her father standing on the steps, with his handkerchief pressed to his eyes in an attitude of profound and uncontrollable grief.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ON KATE'S wedding morning Clifford Raven, the true Earl of Carr-Lyon, slept rather longer than he had as yet done, and Nellie and her father, rejoicing that he should do so, went about on tiptoe as they set about their labor of love, the preparation of a delicate little breakfast for him.

"I am so glad he has slept so well, father," said Nellie, in a whisper, her sad eyes growing lighter for a moment. "The doctor says that all he wants is sleep and rest, and that soon——"

She stopped and sighed involuntarily as she remembered that her patient's recovery meant his departure, perhaps for ever.

"Well, he's had a good sleep this morning, anyway," said Mr. Wood, squatting before the fire to make some toast. "I shouldn't wonder if he's able to get up and move about a bit; but he mustn't be too venturesome! I've seen many a man as thought himself quite out o' the sick lists, chucked back for two or three weeks for bein' too cheeky, as you may say. For, what Mr. Raven wants is just to come out into the sun and sit about, just like—just like them lizards as is in foreign countries; there's nothing like the sun for all kinds of ailments. 'Pears to me, Nell, my lass, as you want a little of the same kind o' medicine yourself; this long bout o' nursing has tried you, my gel. What a fuss them bells do make, to be sure," he broke off looking up at the sky, and in the direction of Sandford church.

"It's Lord Carr-Lyon's wedding, father," said Nellie.

"Ayo," he said, with a chuckle; "he was not long making up his mind after the grand party! This 'ere toast's done now, and I'll go and see if Mr. Raven's waking yet."

It was past noon when Clifford woke, and he seemed almost like his old self; so bright were his eyes and cheerful his manner.

Nellie stood by him while he ate his breakfast, watching him with the rapt attention usual with her, and during the time the bells were silent, and she said nothing about the wedding.

"I think I'll get up, Nellie," he said, after awhile.

"Are you sure you are well enough?" she asked anxiously.

"I feel as strong as a lion," he said; "though I'm aware I don't look like it," he added ruefully as he stared at his thin hands. "Oh, yes; I'm on the right road now, Nellie. I want to get up and about again, and relieve you of the terrible burden I have been,—no, for that sounds ungrateful; and I know you have thought it no burden! But I'll get up, Nelly, and take a walk around the quarry. By Jove, it's years instead of weeks since I saw the sky face to face!"

She went out and sent her father to him, and Clifford got dressed, though it was rather a lengthy process.

"These things must have grown since I was lying here," he said with a laugh, as he put on the coat that had fitted him so closely and compactly and now seemed so vast and roomy.

"Ah! you'll soon fill 'em out again," remarked Wood. "What you want is a little sun, as I was telling Nelly, and a course o' steak and stout. Do you remember the steak you eat the first day you came here, well that's the sort."

Clifford laughed in company, and they went out on to the ledge in front of the cottage. Nellie had carried a chair out in the sun, and they made him sit down.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, drawing a long breath, and looked around with an invalid's delight in the fresh open air. "It's worth being shut up in a room for a week or two to enjoy this as I am doing!"

"You're looking pretty bright and cheerful, I must say," said Wood, with a look of approval.

"I wish I could make you understand how happy I feel," responded Clifford, extending a hand to each. "But I could not unless I tell you all my story; and it's such a strange story, such a wonderful romance, that I'm afraid you'd think I was delirious again."

Nellie and her father exchanged a glance of apprehension.

"Don't excite yourself now," said the old man.

"Do not be afraid. I am all right, and not at all likely to make myself bad again. But it is a strange and romantic story; so strange that at times I can scarcely persuade myself that it's true. I've always been such a rolling stone, such a waif and general outcast, that to find myself suddenly——" he stopped and laughed, and passed his hands over his eyes. "I was nearly telling you," he said.

There was pause for a moment or two.

"I should think I should be able to get into Sandford to-morrow."

"Oh, no, no!" said Nellie quickly.

"Certainly not," said Mr. Wood. "You don't want to go and knock yourself up again. Besides, what do you want to go to Sandford for; all in such a hurry? Can't me or Nellie do it for you?"

"No," said Clifford with a smile. "No one can do it for me, I must do it myself. I have to go and secure my life's happiness, to right a wrong and claim my own!"

Again Nellie and her father exchanged glances.

"And please Heaven when I get it there shall be some good done with it. I will see if we can't lessen some of the poor man's troubles, hereabouts. For one thing we'll have a couple of lifeboats at Sandford: and there shall be some decent cottages—and why shouldn't every poor man have a plot of ground to till for himself; yes, and a cow to provide milk for his young ones, and——"

"There, there," broke in Mr. Wood, "you're exciting yourself——"

"No, I'm not," said Clifford with a reassuring smile. "It does me good and puts fresh strength into me to picture some of the things I can do when I get the money ——"

Mr. Wood began to look frightened.

Clifford laughed, and laying his hand upon the hard, horny one resting on his chair, looked up at the honest face.

"You think I am light headed, I know," he said. "But I am not. I am talking simple common-sense. And I don't know why I shouldn't tell you. Listen. When I came into the quarry a few months ago, I was just a mere waif and stray, as I said, a mere nobody with a penny—yes, I had a shilling! And I shall have that shilling as long as I live," and his hand went mechanically to his heart, over which in his waistcoat pocket, Kate's shilling lay. "I didn't give you my right name—I'll tell you what that is directly—and I hadn't, as I thought, a chance of doing the slightest thing for myself in England. I meant leaving it as you know. And all the time I felt as if I were leaving my heart behind me. And I should have been! For just before I saw you that lucky afternoon I had lost my heart for good and all, and—" he stopped "—and now the wheel has turned and I am rich. Not only rich but I hope and trust a happy man. But that depends upon her, upon the young lady—" he stopped again. "Friends, friends," and he held out his hands, "to-morrow, or as soon as I am strong enough, I am going to her to lay my heart at her feet, to tell her of this wonderful change in my fortunes, and beg her to accept my life and——"

Once more he stopped, his face working, his lips quivering.

"Do you think I am talking nonsense? No, it's just simple truth. And I know—I feel what her answer will be, for I feel and know that she loves me—and—great Heaven, I can scarcely persuade myself that I am not dreaming! But you will see—you will see. To-morrow, if I am not strong enough to go, I will get you to take a letter——"

He broke off suddenly, for the Sandford bells began to peal out.

"What bells are those?" he asked, with a smile.

"Sandford bells," said Mr. Wood.

Nellie did not speak, but stood a little behind the chair, her hands clasping it tight, her face white and drawn.

"Sandford!" said Clifford. "What are they ringing for? Somebody's birthday, I suppose?"

"No, it's nobody's birthday as I knows of," said Mr. Wood, glad to get him away from the other subject. "That's a wedding peal, that is!"

"A wedding peal! Someone has been married, then!" said Clifford, with a smile. "Who is it? But it's no one I know, I suppose?"

"I reckon you know them," he said lightly. "It's Lord Carr-Lyon's wedding—him and Miss Kate Meddon!"

Clifford looked up with the smile still on his face, as if he had misunderstood; then he repeated, "Lord Carr-Lyon and Miss Kate Meddon!" still in a mechanical fashion.

Then he started to his feet, and caught the old man by the collar of his coat, and, with a stern air and white face confronted him.

"How dare you mock me?" he shouted. "How dare you play upon the feelings of a sick man! Whose wedding, do you say? Speak, man, and tell me the truth this time!"

Mr. Wood gasped and stuttered in dreadful alarm.

"Be easy now, Mr. Raven," he pleaded, thinking Clifford's mind was going. "Be easy and calm like now. There now! I'll tell ye slowly and it's gospel truth. It's Lord Carr-Lyon and Miss Kate, the major's daughter, as was married to-day!"

With a wild and awful cry, Clifford flung the old man from him and stood erect, with his hands extended over his head.

"Married! Married!" he said, and in such a tone of agony and despair that it rang again in the hearts of the two listeners. "Married! Kate married! Oh, Heaven have mercy on me! Kate married, and to him!"

Then he turned to the terrified old man again.

"It's false! false! and you know it! You are only trying me! It's a jest—a cruel, hard-hearted joke! She can't be married! No, that can't be, for if she were, then everything would be too late! Tell me the truth! Oh, forgive me!" he cried hoarsely. "Don't mind what I say, don't think hard of me. I scarcely know what I'm saying. Not married! Oh, don't tell me that! I'd rather hear that she's dead—no, no, not that either. Oh, Heaven, have mercy on me!" and he hid his face in his hands and sank into the chair.

The bells pealed on. They seemed to madden him. He sprang upright and made as if he were going to rush across the quarry in the direction of Sandford; but Nellie caught one arm and her father the other.

"Let me go!" he shouted. "She shall not marry him—the impostor! She shall not, at any rate, until I have told her who I am! Let me go!" and he struggled with them fiercely; but the old man's tough hands held him in a firm grasp.

"Hearken to me, lad," he said, with emotion, "whether you be sane or mad, I cannot tell; but whichever ye be, ye must bide here, for it won't do 'ee no good to let 'ee go on a wild-goose chase. For a wild-goose chase it would be—seein' that the Lord Carr-Lyon married Miss Kate early this mornin', and that by this time they are on their way to the honeymoon."

The tortured man ceased struggling, and stood with clasped hands and frenzied eyes; the bells pealing like mad and demoniac laughter in his ears.

"Tell him, Nellie; most like he'll believe you," said Mr. Wood gravely.

"It is true," she murmured; "his lordship and Miss Meddon were married this morning."

"Let me go, please," he said huskily; and he walked with the staggering gait of a drunken man to the cottage, locked the door after him, and flung himself full length on the floor.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

COLLECTING POISON.—The manner in which snake poison is obtained for medicinal purposes is quite interesting. The keeper, armed with a thick glove, seizes the snake around the neck and presents a small glass to the irritated animal, which bites viciously at the glass, into which the poison flows. In this way it is collected from the rattlesnake and the deadly little copperhead.

THE NOSE.—It is announced that a new journal is to appear as the organ of the science. It is desirable that the nose should be as long as possible, this being a sign of power and genius. A straight nose denotes a just, serious, fine, judicious, and energetic mind; a Roman nose, a propensity for adventures; and a wide nose with large open nostrils is a mark of great sensuality. A cleft nose shows benevolence. The curved fleshy nose is a mark of domination and cruelty. The curved, thin nose, on the contrary is a mark of brilliant mind, but vain and disposed to be ironical. A turned up nose denotes a weak mind.

ENVELOPES.—How were letters sealed before the invention of envelopes? Bees-wax was the first material used. Then came sealing wax mixed with a white substance. Red wax began with Louis VI., 1113, and green wax first made its appearance about the year 1168. In the thirteenth century, yellow, brown, rose, black, and blue were added to the foregoing colors. Black is a rarity met with in the seals of the military religious orders. Under the First Empire people began to use wafers, which were brought from Italy by the soldiers and officers of the French army. Those wafers were cut with a punch out of a thin leaf made of flour. Finally, gummed envelopes gradually began to replace sealing-wax and wafers nearly everywhere. The first envelopes which were made here date back to 1840.

ABOUT MARRIAGE.—In Russia the girls put small heaps of grain on the floor, one for each present, and then a cock is brought in to decide, by the heap he selects for picking, who has the first chance of getting a husband. To ascertain whether they will stay in the house or leave for another home, they throw a boot backwards over their heads. If the toe falls towards the thrower, she will marry and leave the service; if the heel, she has to wait for deliverance from single blessedness or servitude at least another year. The Swedish bride tries to see the groom before he sees her, to gain the mastery. She places her foot before his during the ceremony and sits in the bridal chair first. She must stand near the groom so that no one can come between them. It is deemed specially ominous in Scotland for a lump of soot to fall down and spoil the breakfast on the day of the wedding, for a bird to die in its cage, or for a bird to sit on the window-sill and chirp long. The bride must carefully avoid breaking a dish on that day. There is a curious custom in modern Greece. The groom is shaved by a young man whose parents are both living, while the young men sing, "Razor silvered and gilt, shave tenderly the young man's cheeks, don't leave a hair, lest the parents of his bride think him ugly."

DR. FAUSTUS.—The tradition of the devil and Dr. Faustus, concerning the first invention of printing, was derived from the odd circumstance in which the Bibles of the first printer, Fust, appeared to the world. When he had discovered this new art, and printed off a considerable number of copies of the bible, to imitate those that were commonly sold in MSS., he undertook the sale of them at Paris. It was to his interest to conceal this discovery, and to pass off his printed copies for MSS. But as he was enabled to sell his bibles at sixty crowns, while the other scribes demanded five hundred, this raised universal astonishment; and still more when he produced copies as fast as they were wanted, and even lowered his price. The uniformity of the copies increased wonder. Information was given in to the magistrate against him as a magician; and in searching his lodgings a great number of copies were found. The red ink, and Fust's red is peculiarly brilliant; which embellished his copies was said to be his blood; and it was solemnly adjudged him to be in favor with the devil. Fust was at length obliged to save himself from the bonfire by revealing his art to the Parliament of Paris, who discharged him from all prosecution in consideration of this useful invention.

GRAVITY is the best cloak for sin in all countries.

OTHER DAYS.

BY SUSIE M. BEST.

Sweet as the sound of music
Cleaving the midnight air,
Thrilling the solemn silence
And echoing faint and rare.

Sweet as the star of evening
Glimmering thro' a haze,
So sweet are olden memories
And the thoughts of other days.

Dear as the withered flower,
Memento of the dead—
Dear as the lifeless body
In the quiet churchyard bed,

Dear as the hope of meeting
The loved, mid heaven's rays,
So dear are olden memories
And the thoughts of other days.

The heart grows warm and tender,
The eyes are blurred with tears,
As the past sweeps like the floodtide,
Bearing the drift of the years.

The soul grows faint with longing,
To tread the lost days' maze,
As it dreams of the olden memories
And the thoughts of other days.

ONLY A VIOLET.

BY D. G. H.

CHAPTER IV.

KEITH had a double motive in urging Molly to keep their secret from their hostess. He feared not only had Mrs. Allonby other views for her little protege, but she would have considered his love for Molly as downright treachery to his cousin.

Keith could not exactly define his own feelings for Sybil.

He had known what was expected of him for years. He had not one spark of love for Miss Hurst, but he got on with her.

She did not expect any very elaborate courtship, was a fine-looking girl, and a wife any man might have been very proud of.

But for that meeting in the wood, but for his introduction to Molly, it is quite possible Keith might have married his cousin, and believed the calm regard he felt for her the strongest sentiment his heart was capable of.

And now, the evening before his return—the very day on which he had plighted his troth to Molly—his mother quietly said to the Earl, alluding to her son and Sybil—

"It is high time they were married!"

Lord Ogilvie did not answer at first. A man of few words he was very much under his daughter's influence; but Lady Alice, who understood him thoroughly, did not like his seeming indifference, and rejoined—

"Papa, do put away your book and listen to me. Keith is six-and-twenty. This will be Sybil's fourth London season. There is nothing in the world for them to wait for. Don't you think they had better be married at Easter?"

"If they wish it, my dear!"

The reply, simple and acquiescent though it was, highly displeased Lady Alice. Perhaps she resented the degree of doubt in the "if."

"Of course they wish it. Haven't they been in love with each other ever since they were little bits of children!"

"I never thought so."

"Papa," pleaded the widow, fairly brought to bay, "do, please, say what you mean plainly. I can't bear your seeming to agree with me, and then raising difficulties."

Lord Ogilvie changed his manner.

"Alice, I made up my mind, after poor Jim's troubles, I would never interfere in the matter of marriage again. If your boy and Sybil fancy each other well and good. He will have a fine fortune, and the girl will gain a good husband; but I won't interfere with them."

"They are devoted to each other!"

Lord Ogilvie shrugged his shoulders.

"They don't quarrel, and they seek each other's society about as much as two young people, who are the only youthful ones in a family of elderly folk mostly do—that's all."

"I mean to speak to Keith!"

"And then?"

"I shall tell him he is treating Sybil unfairly. The engagement ought either to be publicly announced, or the report of it contradicted. The girl will never have any suitable offers while people believe her a fiancee."

"Please yourself, Alice"—here the old man's voice grew sad—"Heaven knows I would alter things if I could, and make Keith my heir. The boy is a true Tempest—generous and loyal to the core! He has poor Durant's charm of manner, too. One's whole heart goes out to him, while, though Beatrice was the apple of my eye and her husband worthy of her, I never could care for their child!"

"Sybil is a darling!"

"I know she is very popular, and will never lack friends. A charming girl, according to all accounts; but, Alice, nature made one fatal defect in Sybil—she has no heart!"

"Papa!"

"It is quite true, my dear. I don't deny she has some mechanical substitute which performs all the proper functions of the missing organ so far as her bodily health concerned, but as regards other people, I repeat, emphatically, Sybil has no heart!"

"She is most dutiful girl!"

"Possibly; but she has no heart. I assure you, Alice, it bewilders me. Her father was the most impulsive, loving nature. Her mother was so sensitive that she faded out of life just because it was a weariness to live without him. And yet the only child of such a pair is heartless!"

"I think, papa, you are very hard on Sybil."

"Not a bit of it, my dear. I am prepared to act most generously to her. I will provide her with a priceless trousseau; the family jewels shall be reset as soon as she is likely to need them; and I mean to refurnish the dower upon her until such time as my death makes her lady of the Castle."

"And I may tell Keith?"

"Tell him what I am willing to do for Sybil, and that I am ready to consent to the match; but don't tell him I am eager for it, for I assure you I am not."

"He will be home to-morrow!"

"Yes; he has stayed a long time with the Allonbys. Sir Lewis has no sister, I suppose?"

Alice Durant fumed at this implied suggestion.

"If he had a dozen Keith is too honorable to forget his obligations to his cousin."

"He hasn't got any, my dear!"

Lady Alice felt so sure of her son's compliance—so certain of his falling in with her wishes—that a letter she received the next morning was a terrible shock to her.

Thinking over his mother's hopes after his parting with Molly, the idea came to Keith it would soften the blow if she had some slight preparation for it; and so, instead of waiting for his return, he wrote by the night post only a few lines, but sufficient to change the current of Alice Durant's mind, and fill her with speechless indignation.

"My Dearest Mother,—I hope to be with you to-morrow evening, but I write to ask you to prepare my grandfather for a surprise. I want him to forget the old plan of a marriage between Sybil and myself. Even if my cousin would consent to the match (which I have no grounds for hoping), it is out of the question, for I have lost my heart to another. I won't describe her to you now, or my letter would run on indefinitely. Miss Lester has been staying here for the last three weeks. She is the niece of a Mr. Cameron, the lawyer who manages the Allonby estates. Lewis and I have seen a good deal of the family, and Molly is a great favorite with Mrs. Allonby. She is only eighteen, an orphan, and portionless; but we are neither of us ambitious, and we mean to be very happy on my four hundred a year until grandfather can get me some appointment abroad. Believe me, mother, I shall be far happier with my darling than sharing the wealth of an unbeloved wife. You must love my Molly when you know her. Deferring all else till we meet—I am, dear mother, your loving son,

KEITH TEMPEST DURANT."

Lady Alice was too horrified to face the company of her father and Sybil; she sent word she had a bad headache, and spent the morning in her own room, not resting, as they supposed, but racking her brain for any means of averting the terrible misfortune that threatened her.

Keith would have been wiser had he written to Lord Ogilvie instead of his mother, unless he had left both in ignorance of his plans.

But the young man remembered the tragedy of his uncle's death. Boy as he had been at the time of the prodigal's return, he had never forgotten the scene.

It was a snowy night, and looking from one of the windows of Ogilvie Castle he had seen a man's form tramping wearily up the avenue.

When he told the servants they declared he must be mistaken, since no knock followed.

At last, to humor his whim, they opened the door an hour afterwards, and there, sure enough, half hidden by the snow, lay a still, motionless figure, weary and footsore, overcome by long fast and hard travel.

The son had fainted just as he reached his father's door.

All that care and treatment could suggest was done, but when the wanderer returned to consciousness he was in a high fever. In his delirious ravings he babbled of his wife, his darling whom he had lost, whom poverty had taken from him.

It was a terrible story. If those wild utterances were to be believed, the young wife, whom he had married two years before against his father's wishes, had died of starvation just as surely as hardships and privations had brought her husband to his end.

No skill could save him. He lingered a week and then fell asleep, his trials ended for all time.

The episode had stamped itself indelibly on Keith's brain. If his grandfather left his own son to starve because he married against his wishes, he would have little sympathy with the love affairs of another generation, and so Keith confided by preference in his mother, little recking that the very memory of his uncle's fate would have enlisted his grandfather on his side.

What Lady Alice would have done to avoid the calamity threatening her we cannot say; but fate, which now and then seems (for a time) to favor the wrong side, helped her considerably.

There was a fearful fog that night in London, one of the most terrible ever known.

It came on about three o'clock, and shrouded the whole of the West-end in gloom.

Link boys made a fortune. Omnibuses ceased to run; in fact, very few vehicles were heard at all, and when Keith reached Paddington about six the streets were as silent and deserted as though it had been eight hours later.

With the utmost difficulty he secured a cab, but when they got to the Marble Arch the driver came to an abrpt standstill, and told his fare he dared not go any further.

Foreseeing such a state of things might happen, Keith had left his luggage at the station, except a small hand-bag.

He rewarded the Jehu for the distance already traversed, and set off bravely to walk the remainder.

How it had happened he never knew. Whether the denseness of the fog made sounds less distinct, whether his own thoughts rendered the young man careless, it is impossible to say, but one of the few vehicles still running knocked him down, and when, hours after he was expected, poor Keith at last entered his grandfather's house, he was borne in the arms of two stout porters, while a policeman explained to the earl that the gentleman had met with an accident at Hyde Park Corner, and would have been taken to the hospital but for a card-case in his pocket, which proved his identity.

Lady Alice behaved with admirable calm. The moment she had wrung from the doctor the admission that the case, though dangerous, was by no means hopeless, she seemed to revive.

She was a resolute, strong-minded woman, and devoted to her son's interests. She might have very strange notions as to what was best for him, and preferred to seek his happiness after her lights instead of his own.

But this much must be granted her—she loved him dearly. Even her father was astonished at the never-failing patience with which she carried out the doctor's orders.

There was plenty of assistance, of course—a trained nurse and a whole staff of servants to carry out her orders; but still, save to snatch a few hours of needful sleep, Lady Alice never left the patient. She seemed to have no thought, no care, beyond the sick-room.

It was a terrible struggle.

Though no bones were broken the injuries were severe, and the shock had brought on a fever which cruelly sapped the strength. For days and weeks it was a hand-to-hand struggle with death.

It was early February when the accident happened. The April sunshine poured into the room when at last Keith opened his blue eyes and fixed them lovingly on his mother's face, and she could see the cruel fever light no longer blazed within them.

"Saved."

That was the verdict of the doctor. That was the verdict of the nurse. Mother and grandfather rejoiced their dark days were over.

The young life they dearly loved was not to be taken from them. His convalescence was rapid.

The third day after he came to himself he asked for paper and pencil, and began to write. Then a sudden thought seemed to come to him, and he demanded if there were no letters?

"Let him talk a little," had been the doctor's order, "and, above all things, don't dictate to him. Far better let him talk too much than agitate him by seeming to hide things from him."

With those words ringing in her heart what could Lady Alice answer but the truth—there were several letters and a parcel.

"Anything from Allonby?"

"No. Sir Lewis and his mother have not written. It seems strange for I sent a few lines to tell of your accident, but there has been no reply."

"Perhaps Mrs. Allonby is ill," said Keith, feebly.

"No. Sybil was staying near them last week, and she says the Allonbys are quite well. The mother is in high spirits, for Lewis is engaged."

"Who to?"

How feverishly eager was the voice. Lady Alice felt alarmed.

"Now, Keith, don't excite yourself, or I shall have the doctor scolding me. Sybil did not tell me the young lady's name. A neighbor, I fancy."

"Mother!" cried Keith, with desperate entreaty, "bring me my letters. I must see them."

She brought a pile of notes and a curious shaped brown paper parcel, evidently sent through the "parcels' post."

Keith took the collection eagerly. He knew that Molly had his address; he had given it her himself and begged her to write him, even though he knew a week would see him back with her.

"What is to-day, mother? How long have I been lying here?"

"It is the fifth of April, Keith. Your accident was the ninth of February."

Almost two months, and he had sworn to return to her in a week! What must she think?

His heart sank when he remembered she would be sure to hear from the Allonby's of his accident; besides, had not her sweet voice answered, when he asked her to trust him for a week, "Not a week, Keith, but for ever." Oh, yes! his Molly would be true to him. He need not fear.

With his thin white fingers which were strangely changed by those weeks of illness, Keith Durant turned slowly over the letters.

At last he came to one with the Netherton postmark, directed in a clear, girlish hand. He tore it open and read the hurried lines. Alas! she had not trusted him.

"I return your flowers. Forget that you ever knew me. It is all that I shall ever ask of you. MOLLY."

Surely a cruel letter for a man to read while he lies on what might have been his death-bed! Keith's heart sank. Then a hope struck him.

Molly had implored him to let her know if the persuasions of his relations changed his mind. He had answered nothing could do that.

If he did not come in a week she might doubt him, but if alive he would come. Might not the child have remembered these words, and decided when the week passed he was faithless? If so, she needed pity at his hands, not blame.

Alas! alas! He turned to the envelope of his letter; it bore the stamp "Netherton, 10th February," the very day after his accident, when only one of the seven days he had told her he might be detained was over, Molly had written to renounce him.

What could it mean? Had anyone prejudiced her against him, or——. The truth broke on him at last.

From the very moment of their first call at the red-brick house Keith had feared Lewis Allonby shared his admiration for Molly.

As the days wore on a hundred little trifles confirmed the fear that in the matter nearest his heart his favorite friend was his rival.

He had cautioned Molly not to take Mrs. Allonby into confidence, because apart from that lady believing him pledged to Sybil, he felt she wanted Molly for her son.

The thing was as clear as day. As soon as he had gone Lewis Allonby spoke out, and the Baronet's thousands, the title he could give her, seemed to Molly better worth than the passionate affection of an honest heart.

The very day of her return to her uncle's house she packed up his flowers and sent her little letter of renunciation; and when he lay hovering between life and death the two creatures he had best loved were happy together.

That was the true meaning of it. Sybil's news meant that the young lady Sir Lewis was engaged to—a neighbor she believed—was Molly.

Lady Alice watched her son in perfect silence. When she saw him close his eyes, she came forward to remove the letters, save the one Keith had opened, which he still had clasped in his weak, nerveless hand. He suffered it in silence, only when she touched the parcel he shook his head.

"Leave that please?"

And the first time he was alone, although forbidden to leave his bed, Keith Durant rose and dropped the parcel just as it was into the fire.

He nearly sent the letter after it, but some strange influence held him back. That and the violet Molly had given him at their first meeting were folded away in his pocket-book.

When the doctor came the next day he shook his head, and talked of a relapse.

"You must be careful, Mr. Durant, or we shall have all our work to do over again."

"Couldn't you do it again with a different ending?" said Keith gloomily. "I'm sure I see nothing in life worth struggling for."

And his mother, standing by, heard these words, yet her heart did not feel one pang of remorse.

She still felt that she had done her duty; that, given the opportunity to act differently, she would have refused it.

CHAPTER V.

MR. CAMERON was sitting in his office with a grave shadow on his face. It was a month since Alice and her cousin returned from the Towers. His wife and daughter were daily expecting Sir Lewis to "speak out."

He himself marvelled at their hopefulness in supposing a wealthy Baronet would propose to a lawyer's daughter, yet he could not deny that Sir Lewis came very often to the red-brick house, and seemed to enjoy his visits, yet the truth never dawned on him till this particularly blustering March day, when, after nearly an hour's interview, Sir Lewis had left him after fulfilling Mrs. Cameron's desire in one point, since he most certainly "spoke out," but disappointing it grievously in another, since his story had nothing whatever to do with her daughter.

Sir Lewis first asked the lawyer to regard their interview as confidential, and next begged him not to take offence at anything he might say.

This was bewildering enough, but when the Baronet went on to add he loved Mary Lester, and had asked her to be his wife, Mr. Cameron was simply bewildered.

"I have not come to you to bemoan my own disappointment," said the young man, gravely. "I could no more keep from loving her than the sun can help shining, and I don't regret it. The very loving such a girl as Molly will make a better man of me."

"Then you mean she refused you?"

"Just that, Mr. Cameron. I had very little hope, I confess. I know that my wealth, my beautiful home, and the title my wife must bear might influence many

girls; but I felt, from the first, they would have no power with Molly, unless she loved me she would send me away, but she was so dear to me I risked all—and failed."

The lawyer was amazed, but discreetly said nothing.

Sir Lewis explained that for Molly's sake he thought it would be better for her to be away, and suggested that she should go as companion to a favorite cousin, Lady Bruce of Woodside.

After much discussion this was agreed to. Why had Molly sent back to Keith his flowers, and was evidently fading slowly away.

A word will answer the question. Locked away in her desk was a little note written by the man who, two days before, had wooed her with passionate love, and whose faith she had never doubted?

Keith had been constant to her barely forty eight hours, and Molly would love him all her life. It seemed strange their natures should be so different!

Lady Alice Durant had done her work well. Molly never dreamed for one moment that the note which bore Keith's monogram and was sealed by his crest could have been written by any other than himself.

It came to her the morning of her return to Netherton. One of Molly's duties was to open the door when the servants were busy.

On this occasion the postman gave her quite a pile of letters, and slipped the one addressed to herself into her pocket and stole upstairs as soon as she could steal off unperceived.

With what rapture she looked at the address traced by her lover's hand! With what sweet stolen caress she pressed his writing to her lips!

In what a delighted expectation she began to read her first love letter.

She was a child, a tender, loving child, when she unfastened the letter. When she had read it she was an unhappy, disappointed woman.

"Dear Miss Lester,—I grieve to say that neither my mother nor her father will hear of a marriage between us. I am well aware that you have my promise, and can exact its fulfilment; but as to do so would blast my whole future, make an endless breach between me and my family, and reduce me to well-nigh beggary, I hope you may be disposed to a more lenient course. If you will forget my foolish declaration and give me my freedom, I shall not only be deeply grateful to you, but my mother and Lord Ogilvie will be disposed to reward your kindness in some substantial manner. Hoping you may see the wisdom of this course, I am, dear Miss Lester, your friend and well-wisher,

"KEITH DURANT."

"How could he!" was the cry of the girl's broken heart. "How could he write to me like that? He knew perfectly well he had only to tell me he repented his promise, and I should have restored it to him. But to offer me a 'substantial reward' for his freedom is an insult—a cruel insult!"

That very night she posted her reply and despatched the flowers. She never hesitated for an instant.

It seemed to her, poor child, that the Keith Durant of her love had never existed at all.

She had been taken in by some inferior nature, whom her fancy had idealised into a hero.

The blow had fallen, and was decisive. At least she was spared suspense. She had just this consolation in her sorrow—she knew the worst!

But the knowledge wrought a change in her, and she felt it dimly even herself. She was as one stunned by a very grievous blow.

She seemed deadened to all feeling, incapable of joy or sorrow. She had no hopes, no fears, and she might have sunk into a confirmed morbid state but for Lewis Allonby and his love story.

The Baronet told Mr. Cameron sadly he could do nothing for Molly; but he was mistaken.

His love, its generosity, its unselfishness, restored her faith in human nature. She felt, as she listened to him, as he flung his title, riches, and honors at her feet, seeming to count them as nothing for the love he bore her—she felt then, I say, that though she had been deceived in Keith, yet noble natures did exist.

There were men true, noble, and self-denying, though he was not of them.

A great longing came to the poor child to sob out her story, to throw herself on his compassion, and tell him that, though she could not love him, she would be to him a faithful wife; but Molly was too generous and high-souled to yield to this temptation.

She could not take all from Sir Lewis and give nothing in return, just the same as she could not, for the sake of sympathy with her sorrow, betray Keith Durant's cruelty to his friend.

She refused Sir Lewis in such a way as to make him feel her decision was unchangeable, but she never mentioned to him the name in both their thoughts. It was over.

Only three months before Molly had longed for a change. Only three months before she had felt like a poor caged bird beating its wings against the doors of its prison.

She had thoughts once free from the dull, red-brick house, once clear escaped from the life of drudgery, she must be happy.

Well, now the cage door was opened, the captive was set free, and yet Molly felt as far from happiness as on that birthday afternoon when she wandered in the Allonby Woods and met her fond, false lover.

At a little wayside station station on the way to Woodside a child came to the window selling flowers; and Molly, impelled by an impulse she could not resist, bought a bunch of sweet violets and fastened them in her jacket.

They were fresh and fair, though these other flowers, which had once brought her such joy, were faded and gone.

Was it an omen that there were other pleasures in store for her, even though love was denied her?

A strange peace stole over the childish heart. She would never put another in Keith's place, never trust to a lover's voice again; but, after all, the world was not made up only of those who married and were given in marriage.

Friendship, kindness, sympathy, companionship, all these were open to her. If Lady Bruce was at all like her aunt she thought she could be happy at Woodside, even though Keith's love had failed her.

The Misses Cameron had been much excited at the idea of their cousin residing in a nobleman's family, but Molly took the dignity very simply.

Her uncle said Lady Bruce might one day be a duchess, but that did not make Molly afraid of her; she was Mrs. Allonby's niece, and the gentle mistress of the Towers was Molly's ideal of womanhood.

Besides, she was not likely to see much of the grown-up people; her life would be spent chiefly in the schoolroom, and with the children.

She hoped they were pretty, and felt thankful they were not boys; Mrs. Cameron's sweet lambs having given her a wholesome dread of young specimens of the masculine genus.

Molly left home at ten for her new life, and it was positively six before, tired and weary, she at last saw the welcome name "Woodside," painted in unmistakable black letters on a white board.

"At last!" was the feeling of Molly's heart, as taking up her little handbag and bundle of umbrellas she stepped on to the platform; but the relief gave way soon to a little dread.

Had any one come to meet her. If not, how would she accomplish the seven miles yet remaining of her journey?

But this trouble was soon dispelled, for an elderly lady came forward, and said pleasantly—

"I think you must be Miss Lester?"

She confessed afterwards she was driven to this opinion because no other passenger alighted; not because Molly at all accorded with her preconceived portrait of her daughter's governess.

As the girl simply announced her identity, a puzzled look came into the lady's face, but she said nothing until they were seated in the carriage.

"Lady Bruce would have come to meet you, but she has a cold. My daughter is not very strong, Miss Lester."

Molly made some slight reply, and again the puzzled look came into her companion's face.

"I think I must introduce myself, Miss Lester. I am Lady Yorke, the grandmother of your pupils. I hear you know my sister, Mrs. Allonby, very well?"

Molly's eyes brightened at once.

"Mrs. Allonby is the truest friend I ever had!" she said, eagerly. "She was so good to me!"

"Did she ever tell you you were like someone she used to know?" asked Lady Yorke.

"Yes. At first she told me she thought she must have seen me before."

"Ah! Then she saw it too! The likeness has been puzzling me ever since I saw you. I suppose you have no relations called Cameron?"

"I have spent all my life with Mr. Cameron. My mother was his only sister."

"Then she is dead?"

"She died when I was two years old. Oh, Lady Yorke! did you know her?"

"Yes," said the lady, gently; "and it is of her you reminded me and my sister. Very nearly twenty years' ago I engaged a young governess for my child—even just as Lady Bruce has engaged you now. Her name was Mary Lisle Cameron, but because we had friends of the name we called her Miss Lisle. She left me to be married. I think you must be her daughter. Evelyn will be delighted. Though your mother was with us so short a time we loved her dearly. It does seem strange that her child should come to teach my little granddaughter!"

There was no time for more. The carriage had passed through the lodge gates, and now stopped before the entrance to the Grange.

Evidently it was the house of wealth. A large fire blazed in the hall, and two manservants came forward with respectful alacrity to receive Lady Yorke and her young companion.

CHAPTER VI.

SORROW seldom kills, though grant that worry yearly slays its thousands.

An intense and grievous disappointment, an overwhelming grief falling on us, may change our whole nature, sour our dispositions, and blight our future, but, I repeat, it seldom kills.

It is daily, incessant worry, an hourly struggle with foes and difficulties, an ever-constant conflict between hope and fear, an endless effort to be brave, which exhausts our energies and saps our strength.

We most of us have sufficient elasticity for our hearts to rebound; but after one blow, however crushing who among us can endure a constant series of over-throws, and yet remain unshattered?

So it was with Keith Durant.

Too young at the date of his father's death to realize his loss, it may be truly said he had never known a sorrow until the girl he loved wrote renouncing him for ever.

It was a terrible blow! It destroyed his hopes and faith; it killed all his fair dreams for the future, and no doubt it materially retarded his recovery, but it did not break his heart.

Keith struggled slowly back from the gates of the valley of the shadow of death, until, when the June roses came in bloom, he was himself again—as strong and well as before that fatal accident.

Himself again! The doctors said so. It was a complete recovery, and, so far as mere physical strength was concerned, no doubt Keith was unaltered.

But when he began to return to the dull routine of everyday life those round him saw a difference.

Keith had been emphatically young for his years, with a boy's relish for fun, a never-failing cheerfulness which brightened those round him.

He had been the very life of his grandfather's home, and Lord Ogilvie was the first to notice the change.

His grandson seemed a different person—cold and sarcastic, brilliantly witty at times; at others almost morbidly quiet and silent.

Keith seemed to live within himself. He never spoke a word of feelings or thoughts, he never made the least allusion to his future. He might have been forty instead of twenty-six; and, instead of bringing cheerfulness into the house, his cold, cynical manner alarmed servants and visitors.

The Earl waited, hoping with returning strength the change would disappear. Finding it didn't, without a word to his daughter he spoke to the young man himself.

"Is there anything on your mind, Keith?"

Keith started. At that moment he had been wondering why Lewis Allonby did not write to tell him of his engagement, and whether it would be long before his false love of other days became "my lady."

It had been an old promise between him and Lewis that the first of them who married should claim the other as groom's-man.

Unless Molly purposely sowed dissension between them, and prejudiced Sir Lewis against him, the Baronet was not likely to forget the old compact. When the invitation came, should he accept it? He was still far from a conclusion when his grandfather's question aroused him.

"Is there anything on your mind, Keith?"

Keith lifted his head; shook himself after the fashion of a Newfoundland dog, and answered—

"No, my lord. What should there be?"

"You seem out of spirits—depressed."

Keith felt puzzled; he really loved Lord Ogilvie, and could not find it in his heart to refuse his anxiety as he would have done another's.

"Months of illness do not tend to raise a man's spirits."

"But you are well now?"

"Perfectly."

"It's no use your trying to deceive me, Keith," said the old man, gently. "I am convinced there is more than the memory of physical illness troubling you. My boy, don't you know I would help you to the utmost of my power? Make a list of your debts, and let me see what I can do for you."

Keith smiled.

"My dear grandfather, it is just like you to offer it, but, unless we think of the doctor's bill—which may be alarming—I don't owe a penny in the world!"

"Then what is it?"

"What is what?"

"Your trouble."

"I cannot tell you. It is not debt, be assured of that; and I have nothing to be ashamed of, I assure you."

"Then I can guess it."

"I don't think so."

"You have found out you cannot carry out your mother's wish and marry Sybil, and you shrink from telling her so!"

Keith started. Till that moment he had completely forgotten Sybil Hurst.

"I am not in love with my cousin," he said slowly, "not the least in the world, but I don't think the omission troubles me."

Lord Ogilvie came a little nearer.

"My boy," he said, kindly, "I don't deny that you would be a richer man than I can make you if you married Sybil Hurst, but whatever your mother may think you are in no wise bound to do so. I have fancied lately you may have found out you care for someone else!"

"And then——"

The Earl sighed.

"I opposed one marriage once, Keith, bitterly. I did not succeed in preventing it, but my harshness brought bitter sorrow on myself, and in the end lost my son's life. I took a solemn oath then, Keith, that I would never again interfere to prevent a marriage. If you care for anyone who is a lady in mind and feeling (I don't think you could care for one who was not), you shall never hear a word from me of the family arrangement for you to wed your cousin, and I will do the best I can to start you and your wife comfortably in life. I have saved money, and I tell you frankly I shall leave Sybil nothing beyond what the law gives her. The entailed property makes her a great heiress; all else I always meant for you!"

"You are kinder to me than I deserve But there is not a woman in England I desire to marry!" answered poor Keith, sadly.

"Is there one out of England? Your father was of French extraction. There would be nothing wonderful in your having a French bride."

"I know of no one I wish to marry grandfather, and I know of nothing I want to do. I seem aimless, purposeless!"

"That's bad," said the Earl, gravely. "What's become of your friend Allonby? Surely he could help you shake off this fit of the blues?"

"Allonby is going to be married, and I haven't heard from him for ages!"

Lord Ogilvie was very quick at seeing things, despite his seventy odd years. He jumped to a conclusion which was not entirely right, but yet could not be called a mistake.

He felt certain Keith had been in love, and that Sir Lewis was his successful rival! So far, his idea was that of Keith himself; but he never dreamed of the treachery played on his boy—the bright dreams of happiness, the long engagement, and the cruel awakening.

"Then, of course, he is too busy to come here?" said Lord Ogilvie, cheerfully. "And I suppose you would not care to go to the Towers?"

"I'd rather go to Jericho!" said Keith, crossly. "A stupid, hateful place! I shall never set my foot in it again!"

"I am going down to Ogilvie Castle the first week in July, and I suppose Sybil will have tired out Mrs. Devereux's patience by then!"

Mrs. Devereux had been kind enough to chaperone the heiress, since, of course, at the beginning of the season Lady Alice could not leave her son.

Somehow, Sybil had seemed to prefer that the arrangement should continue; so Mrs. Devereux, a distant cousin—and rather poor one—had received a very liberal cheque for Miss Hurst's expenses, and would only restore her to her family when they migrated to the country.

Keith looked up quickly.

"I have not seen Sybil for ages!"

"No? Keith, I have not the slightest wish to bias you, but I think you ought to make up your mind. Either come with us to Ogilvie and propose to Sybil, or stay away and let your mother announce to one or two talkative friends that there is no idea of a marriage between you. I think the matter should be set at rest one way or the other!"

"So do I."

"Your mother's wishes are not on it, but I don't think they ought to weigh with you against your own. We are a long-lived race, and it is highly probable I may last another fifteen years. While I live Sybil will never have the power to deprive your mother of her home at Ogilvie!"

"I don't think Sybil would wish to. She and the *mater* are excellent friends!"

The Earl sighed.

"She is my own grandchild, and daughter of two of the finest natures I ever met; and yet, Keith, I have never cared for Sybil. She seems to be almost heartless!"

Mr. Durant smiled a little sarcastically.

"Yet you advise me to marry her?"

"I do not advise it!"

"You seem to."

"Until this morning I thought it would be a terrible mistake for Sybil to become your wife!"

"And what has changed our opinion?"

The old man hesitated.

"I may be mistaken, but it strikes me, Keith, the love of your heart has been given already—and given in vain!"

"And if it were so?"

"If it were so! As the Tempests are not given to love twice, you will never have more than affection and respect to offer a wife. Better marry a proud, resolute nature like Sybil's than a gentle, clinging girl, who might break her heart if she discovered your love did not equal hers!"

"Perhaps you are right," said Keith, slowly. "If I never can love any woman it will be a relief to be spared the semblance of a courtship. I fancy Sybil would be content with a very dignified wooing. She is as unromantic as myself!"

"And the other attachment—you admit there is one—is in vain?"

"There was one," answered Keith, bitterly; "but it is dead and gone. I would not wed the woman I once worshipped if there were no other in the wide world!"

"Then you are free?"

"Utterly and entirely free."

"It wants nearly a fortnight to our going to Ogilvie, Keith. In that time you ought to be able to make up your mind!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LET us beware, in our daily walk, of everything that will indispose and unfit us for communion with God. The companions, for instance, from whose presence we shall feel it a kind of contradiction to pass into the presence of God; the worldly thoughts of ambition, of covetousness, of pride, which, if indulged freely and without restraint at other times, will not, even though we bid them, give place at these times; which, if we allow to make commonly a beaten highway of our heart, will not leave that heart at a moment's warning a sanctuary and a temple, but will still keep thronging in, will light like unclean birds, spoiling our sacrifice, and we shall not be able, like Abraham, to fray them away.

TOLL, TOLL, TOLL!

BY S. C. P.

Toll, toll, toll!
For the old year slowly dying,
Grim, gaunt, sere,
On the breast of Time now lying.

Hopes of youth are fleeting,
Hearts with care are beating:
Ho! ye wardens of the bells,
Toll, toll, toll!

Toll for Earth's enticing fashions,
Toll for Strife's unholy passions,
Toll for Friendship sore-quited,
Toll for Hope's enchantments blighted.

Toll for Love's fond pledges broken,
Toll for Want and Woe unspoken,
Toll for mourners sadly weeping,
Toll for Sin vast harvests reaping!

"I WAS DREAMING"

BY T. L. T.

CHAPTER I.

THE rain poured down unceasingly; the wind howled mournfully round the walls of Ashmead Hall; but little cared the merry band of young folks, who were hunting through the spacious garrets, headed by their fair girlish hostess, who had taken a sudden fancy to explore these old lumber rooms in search of genuine Queen Anne furniture; and as her husband was ready to humor this or any other whim of his pretty bride's, he and his shooting friends worked manfully, and rendered themselves dusty and cobwebby from head to foot in dragging out ponderous pieces of furniture which had been long hidden from the light, and now elicited exclamations of "Too lovely!" "Genuine Chippendale!" "A treasure, Maude!" from the pretty critics, who ruined their dainty handkerchiefs in trying to polish old locks and massive hinges, and pronounced their opinions with the most laudable solemnity, ordering all their willing assistants to exert themselves afresh, till at last they rebelled, and declared that human nature was incapable of further labor unless refreshed by libations of champagne and seltzer, or whatever beverage was most dear to each individually.

"Well, you really have been very good," said the fair chatelaine, "and we are longing for tea, are we not, girls? So we will adjourn, if you will just move out this little cabinet, Charlie darling."

Of course Charlie thus urged put his shoulder, so to speak, to the wheel with an energy which proved him unobservant of Talleyrand's maxim—

"A sudden excess of zeal is often productive of more harm than good;" for Charlie had not observed that the cabinet in question, which was remarkably solid for its size, was standing on a box, and not one with it, as it appeared to be in the dim light of the garret, so his hasty exertion of strength upset it with a sudden startling crash.

The ladies gave pretty little screams, and one or two (of course unconsciously) clung for support to masculine arms indeed, one handsome Hussar found it quite necessary to pass his strong arm round a slender waist and keep it there longer than seemed absolutely required.

For after all no one was the worse, except that the host had slightly grazed his knuckles, for which his wife bestowed on him as much sympathy as if he had narrowly escaped from the most terrible danger and was suffering from the most grievous bodily injuries.

Fortunately the cabinet was not damaged, for it had been fashioned in the days when the British workman knew not the art of scamping; but the lock had given way, and soon it was carried downstairs, and its contents investigated by curious eyes.

The fair marauders were rewarded by discovering a few withered flowers, the miniature of a young man with a bright handsome face, and a roll of manuscript, yellow with age.

"How like Charlie, Lady Howard!" said one of the guests, looking at the picture. "It must be an ancestor."

"There may be a family likeness," said Lady Howard; "but of course it is not nearly so handsome as he is."

"You must make allowances for dress," replied Mr. Danvers, smiling a little. "This must be the date of Queen Anne, at least. Ah! you have another treasure, Miss Lister?"

"A sapphire and diamond link; such a beauty. Are we to have all we find, Maude?" replied Miss Lister, holding up the ornament, which was really of value, and elicited exclamations of surprise.

Meanwhile, one of the gentlemen was trying to decipher the faded writing of the manuscript, and became so deeply engrossed in his task that even Lady Howard's summons to refresh himself with tea or wine was unheard.

"What have you found there, Colonel?" asked Charlie, otherwise Sir Charles Howard. "It seems interesting."

"A perfect romance, my dear boy. With Lady Howard's permission, I will decipher it, and read it aloud presently."

This was eagerly assented to, and Colonel Nelthorpe further stimulated everyone's curiosity by searching questions as to whether the house could boast of any traditions or ghosts.

"Well, I believe there are plenty," said Lady Howard; "but Charlie never can tell me. He thinks so much more of the shooting than of the old pictures. I hope you have something deliciously dreadful to thrill us with there."

"It seems genuine, at any rate," replied the Colonel. "Will you hear it to-night, Lady Howard?"

"Oh, yes, please; if you are ready," exclaimed the ladies, in a breath.

"Then may I further suggest that it be read in the library?" said Colonel Nelthorpe.

"The library!" cried Sir Charles, who was too fond of out-door life to set much store on the valuable collection of books he had inherited from his father. "Why are we to go to that room especially, Colonel? It is far jollier in here or in the smoking-room."

"I have my reasons," replied Colonel Thorpe, mysteriously. "And now I must retire there to study my treasure trove, that your patience may not be over-taxed by my hesitation when I endeavor to read it to you."

No questioning elicited anything from the courteous Colonel, though the housekeeper, a retainer whose whole life had been spent in her master's family, confided to some of the young ladies that the Colonel had been to see her, and asked her "all manner of questions, and had spent half an hour in the picture gallery, though the draughts were fit to turn a windmill."

However, dinner and the inevitable cigars which followed were ended at last, and the ladies, who had been eagerly awaiting their companions, established themselves round the glowing fire in the library.

"It looks dreary enough, Maude; are we to have no more light?" asked the host, as he, after his usual fashion, found himself a seat as close to his wife as the customs of Society would permit of.

"No! no! this is just right for a ghost story—only a reading-lamp for Colonel Nelthorpe. You must sit in that old carved chair, Colonel; you will look so imposing."

"I wish to place Charles in that, Lady Howard; and I never promised a ghost story," replied the Colonel.

Sir Charles objected to the chair; but finally consented, on condition that his wife occupied some cushions close to him; and the others found themselves seats, with a marked preference on the part of the gallant Captain of Hussars for a very dark corner, where stood a comfortable couch just large enough for two, which the Captain somewhat unnecessarily explained that he selected because he always liked to do the right thing, and evidently that was the proper sort of place from which to hear the Colonel's horrors.

An opinion which was shared by pretty Alice Lister, whom he persuaded to occupy part of the seat with him.

The strong light of the lamp was concentrated on Colonel Nelthorpe's clearly-cut pale features and iron-gray hair, throwing them into strong relief against the darkness of the remote corners of the room; and, without any further delay, he read as follows from old papers.

* * * * * *

"It was a wintry night, and I sat musing over my fire. I had no taper, but the moon was at the full, and her rays reflected from the snow outside made my chamber bright, though indeed I knew not, for I was deep in thought of things past, and yet to come.

"My sleeping-room was plainly furnished for maidens had not many things about them; but the flames shooting up merrily from the great logs piled on the hearth glistened on something I had gazed at a hundred times already that day with secret pride. A rich white brocade, powdered with silver flowers, which I should don on the morrow, for it would be my bridal morn.

"Such a happy life I had spent under the old roof, where outside, all day and night, the rooks cawed in the elms. We were seven boys and girls—myself, Dorothy, aged eighteen, then my sister Priscilla, four boys, and Baby Cely, everyone's darling.

"Our father, Squire Neville, farmed his own land, as his forefathers had done, and our dear, gentle mother looked to the ways of her house, and brought up her daughters like herself. The poultry were Prissie's special delight. She loved to feed them all, and have the pigeons flying down to nestle on her pretty, plump kerchiefed shoulders, and the little yellow downy ducks and chickens jostling each other round her little pattened feet as she showered the grain liberally down among them.

"I liked the dairy, where, under mother's supervision, I learnt to shape the sweet, firm, yellow butter, and see that the maids kept everything fresh and spotless. Prissie, a demure little soul, would sit hour by hour at her needlework, making each stitch so even and tiny; but I always loved better to be stirring, and was glad to lay aside the fine lawn ruffles we had to make for father's best shirts, and go to gather the fruit in the garden, or the cowslips for wine, or help in the still-room or pastry-room, where we made many dainties, not, of course, forgetting the cheesecakes at Easter, and the mince-pies and brawn at Christmas; and mother shook her head many a time over my needlework, but praised always my spinning, which, in truth, was the one thing in which I excelled Prissie.

"It was cowslip time, and the pretty yellow flowers were all blowing about the meads, so Roger and Gregory and I got big baskets, and went out to gather them for mother, who made the best cowslip wine in the county, after an approved recipe of her own mother's.

"The sun shone brightly, and the larks sang blithely overhead, as we ran down through the garden, where the sweet Nancies and gillyflowers and marigolds were all a-buzz with bees, and away we went to the meadows, and through the stile way, till we came to the Longlands Pasture, where the cowslips grew thick. Then we sat on a bank, and ate our provisions, and looked across the brook to Ashmead Hall, which peeped up among the trees of the park; and Roger, our biggest lad, told us the young Baronet had come home from the wars badly hurt, so the Hall steward had told him overnight.

"None of us remembered him, he had been so long away fighting; but mother had told us how the last Baronet had lost his fair English wife a year after they were married, and her mother had tended the poor little babe for a while, till the father came back again from foreign parts, with a new Madame, black-eyed and fierce-looking.

"And now both she and he were dead, and the English wife's babe was Sir Charles Howard, and his half-brother, the foreign wife's child, was Captain Hugo.

"And as we sat and talked, a kingfisher flew down the stream in all his bravery of gold, blue, and green, and the boys must needs find the nest, for they are rare.

"So off came shoes and hose, and they waded right into the water, whilst I gathered a posy of Lent lilies and ladies' smock and other flowers.

"Presently the boys shouted to me—

"'Dorothy! oh, Dorothy! do come into the water too. We have a moorhen's nest, and all her chicks.'

"I looked round to see if there was anyone in sight. 'What would mother say?' I asked myself. She had never forbidden me to do such a thing; so I unbuckled my shoes, slipped off my blue knit stockings, and drawing my frock up through the pocket-hole, stepped down into the stream.

"It was so fresh and sparkling as it dashed over my feet, and there were such gay beds of kingcups and willow-herb fringing the banks, that I forgot all the enjoyment of the moment, and splashed down merrily to where Roger and Gregory were standing with their hats full of dear little sooty water chicks, looking like balls of black fluff.

"Gregory wanted to take them home to the chicken-yard; but Roger, who was good to every living creature, said, 'Nay, for they would pine and die,' and so we let them go, and went on through the brook to find the kingfisher, and startled the trout and the dainty little minnows as we went.

"I was gathering them as fast as I could, when I heard Roger say, indignantly—

'Good Sirs, I would have you know this is Squire Neville's stream, and you are trespassers.'

"Looking up, I saw two young gentlemen, one fair and comely, the other dark-eyed and olive-skinned, and they both looked at me with laughing eyes.

'In an instant I remembered the plight I was in and my bare feet, and turning I fled up the stream like a lapwing, and found my stockings and shoes, and had just buckled them on when I heard the boys' voices; and, to my horror, up they came with the strangers.

"Oh! how ashamed I felt at having been caught so hoydenishly wading; but Sir Charles was so kind that at last I forgot it a little, and could look up at him, and note how his arm was in a sling from his wounds, and that he looked pale and ill.

"Very often they came to the Grange after that, but I could not like Captain Hugo. But he liked me, though I hated him, and one day he asked me to marry him; and when I could not stop trembling, and besought him to go, he snatched me to him and kissed me till, freeing myself, in my anger I struck his face, and his lip bled a little, cut on his teeth. I was sorry enough then, and begged his pardon humbly; but his face had set and darkened in his wrath, like an evil spirit's, and he hissed in my ear, as he gripped me fast—

"'I know whom you love, my pretty mistress; but he shall never live to wed you. It is my brother.'

"He was ill, and the next day we heard that he had gone to the wars again, and I felt as if a great load were lifted off my heart, though I was ashamed to think of his words, for how could Sir Charles care for a simple country girl like me—he who had been so far, and seen so much?

"He came very nearly every day that May, but I thought it was to see mother—everyone loved and reverenced her—till one day he followed me into the orchard, and told me he loved me.

"Oh! surely since Paradise no day was ever so bright as that one, though I could only hang my head and say—

"'Oh, sweet Sir, surely you cannot know your own mind.'

"But at last he showed me that this great happiness was in all truth for me; and he told me that from the day of which I was ashamed to think when we had first met, he had vowed that I alone should be his bride. And so at last I believed it, and found courage to tell him all he was to me; and, oh! he was so good, so brave, and so handsome that I could but beg mother to teach me to be worthy of so noble a gentleman.

"I could not bear to keep a secret from him, so I told him all about Captain Hugo, and he laughed at my fears, and told me never to dread for him, for Hugo was very hasty, but it was soon over; and he could forgive him for being sore vexed for losing such a treasure as myself.

"And so the happy days flew by, and my wedding clothes were all ready, and the beautiful fine homespun linen that mother gave me for the plenishing of my house was all finished, and packed with sweet woodruff flowers and lavender to make it dainty, and my last day was spent in the dear old home.

"Ah! never had I truly known how dear it was, or how I loved everyone in it, until that last day; but still best of all did I love Sir Charles, and for his dear sake would I have gone even to the world's end.

"I went to bed thinking but of the one blissful thought, that after to-morrow I should have no more to part from my true love.

"I soon fell asleep; but ere long I was dreaming, and a terrible dream it was, and life-like in its clearness. It seemed as if I were in the library at Ashmead Hall, where Sir Charles sat chiefly when alone, for he loved reading.

"I thought I was unseen, but that I could watch him as he leant back in his great chair, with his head against the coat-of-arms carved and emblazoned on it. He sat here, with a smile on his lips, and twined round his fingers a long curl of hair tied with blue ribbon that he had coaxed from me with many a caress.

"It was a grand room, lofty and handsome, with stained glass windows, and trophies of armor, and stags' heads on the panelled walls above the book-cases.

"He looked so handsome as the firelight shone on him, sitting there in his mossy-colored riding suit, with the snowdrops in his coat that I had fastened there when we parted.

"Suddenly I noticed that part of the wall behind him seemed to open quite silently, and I saw a dark face with a cruel frown on it peeping into the room.

"I knew Captain Hugo at once, and in agony I struggled in my dream and tried to cry out; but I was like one turned to stone, and could only look on at what followed.

"Stealthily did the intruder enter with noiseless steps, and a strange-looking dog walked at his heels.

"Wrapt in thought, Sir Charles sat in his chair, and Hugo paused awhile behind him, and from under his cloak I saw him draw a long, sharp dagger. At last his brother moved, and seemed about to rise, saying aloud:

"'By this time to-morrow she will be all my own. My pretty darling, nought can part us now but—'

"'Death!' exclaimed Hugo's deep voice, as with lightning speed he dealt two cowardly blows over the back of the chair on Charles's breast with his dagger.

"Taken all unaware as he was, Charles tried to spring up, but the murderer's cruel work had been all too well done.

"Hugo bent over him with a fiendish triumph, saying:

"'So, brother Charles, by this time to-morrow all will be mine, not yours—the broad lands, the old house, and all; for now sweet Dorothy will marry me.'

"For an instant wrath conquered mortal pain. Charles lifted himself up, saying distinctly:

"'Never! Dorothy is mine—in—life—and—death.'

"Then he fell back once more, and there was the sound of a choking breath—another and all was still; only the dog gave a low howl.

"Hugo looked round him fearfully, and snatched up a purse full of gold that lay on the table; and then, kneeling down, stripped a ring of value from his brother's hand, and tore away his watch; and it seemed borne in on my mind that it was to throw suspicion on robbery, for he turned to an old cabinet, inlaid with curious enamel work, and, forcing it open, rifled its contents.

"He did this in such haste that his sleeve link caught in the lock, tore out, and rolled into a corner.

"Trembling and sobbing I awoke, and thanked Heaven it was all a dream; but I could not be alone, so crept into Prissie's room, and got into her bed, where she comforted me and laughed away my terror, till I slept, and awoke no more till morning."

CHAPTER II.

WE kept early hours then, soon I was being dressed in all my bridal finery. I was just looking in the mirror, as Prissie bade me, and blushing to see myself in such splendid array, for till now my dresses had been of the simplest, when we heard a horseman ride at mad speed to the door; and my bridesmaids laughed, saying:

"'Sir Charles is no laggart bridegroom, Dorothy; he spares not his horse.'

"But in a moment there was an outcry, a noise of many voices all speaking at once, and in came mother, looking as white as a ghost, with arms outstretched to me.

"But there was no need to tell. My half-forgotten dream came back to me, and I knew he was dead. The servants had thought him busy, for his library door was locked on the inside, as was his custom, and it was not till the horses were saddled, as he had ordered over night, that, finding he did not answer, they forced the lock, and entered.

"My father was a Justice of the Peace, and prepared at once to ride over; but I felt that I must go too, and he was so good, my dear father; he took me on a pillion behind him, knowing it was best to grant my passionate desire.

"Nothing was altered. There he lay just as I had seen him, but, yet, there was a heavenly smile on his face now, and his eyes were closed as in sleep.

"I knelt and kissed him, then rose and went to the spot where Hugo's sleeve link had rolled. Silently I showed it to my father and the old steward, who stood wondering, till I tried to undo the secret panel,

then the old man started forward and showed me the trick of it.

"It was one of those doors common enough in old houses, with a flight of steps to the outer air. And on those steps were plainly to be seen the footprints marked in crimson of a man and a dog—outside the falling snow had covered them, and no further trace was left, but just the blood stain on the steps. The tears ran down the old steward's face as he gazed at the marks; but I had no more to do; I had shown all I could, and I went back and knelt again by the side of my darling, who should have been my husband by now, and I whispered in his ear:

"'Dorothy is thine in life and death.'

"I stayed there till my father had done all that was to be done in trying to apprehend the murderer, whoever he might be.

"For a dream is no evidence they say, and a robber might have entered.

"I suppose they left me there long, but I know not, only it had grown dusk when at last they bade me come, and I only stayed to take the snowdrops from Charles's breast. They were faded now, and had cruel red stains on their white leaves; and as I kissed him once more, I vowed in my heart I would be revenged on his murderer, if it were a lifetime before we met again, and the flowers stained with his life blood should be to me a perpetual remembrance.

"For I was young and I had no patience. I could not say 'Heaven's will be done,' for alas! I had loved him so fondly.

"No trace was ever found of the murderer, but news came that at the time Sir Charles was killed Captain Hugo was lying sick in some foreign town, for he had been at the wars since he had left Ashmead.

"When he returned, he showed all signs of grief and mourning, and set on foot many inquiries, and offered much money to find the murderer, and many said how good he was, and how he did all so well. But I could not forget my dream, and the snowdrops that I had kept always revived my feelings of revenge.

"Father was always just, and rightly said:

"'We must not condemn Sir Hugo on the evidence of what might have been a mere disordered fancy, and was at best no proof.'

"So Sir Hugo came to our house as always, though I shunned him, till one evening I was alone in the home meadow, and he came and pressed his suit on me then, and prayed me, as a man prays for his life, to listen to him. I did listen, and waited, then I drew from my bosom a little silken case I had made, and showed him the snowdrops and the jewel, and I noted that he started and trembled; and I quickly said:

"'Your brother's last words were, 'Dorothy is mine in life and death.' These flowers, dyed with his heart's blood, are as a token between him and me for ever. I will wed no other man.'

"Hugo's face grew like that of a corpse, and he stammered:

"'How heard you those words? Who knows?—who could know?'—and seemingly half choked, added, 'The murderer who lost this jewel in tearing open the cabinet was the only person who could hear those words spoken.'

"I replied—

"Where is your dog, Sir Hugo; a small dog, somewhat shaped like a wolf?'

"I thought he would faint; he staggered, and leaned against a tree, exclaiming:

"You are distraught, Dorothy; I have no dog such as you describe. What do you imply? The sad deed remains a mystery, as well you know."

"'Yes,' I answered him, slowly; 'but murder will out. I have sworn to be revenged on him who brought me such pain, and Heaven will yet give him into my hands. The broad lands are yours, Sir Hugo, and the old house; but my love will never be yours.'

"Whereat he gravelled at my feet, madly crying he would give up all he owned to call me wife, and that life without me was a living death and a hell on earth, and many other such wild sayings; and I seemed to myself grown suddenly fiendlike, for not only had I no pity, but I gloried in his pain, as if it were the first fruits of my vengeance, till my mood changed, and in horror at my own feelings, I turned and ran home, and, locking myself in my chamber, I wept bitter tears over the miniature I had of Sir Charles, remembering how kind and good he was to Sir Hugo, and indeed to all persons and things. From that day I saw Sir Hugo no more for fifty years.

"Fifty years is long to look forward to, but not long to look back upon when it is past. My life had slipped by me as Heaven willed, not as I had planned.

"Other wooers came, but I could not listen to them, so I stayed at the old home, and the others were wedded; even Baby Coty is a grandmother now.

"The world has changed very much, but things after not much at the Grange.

"Roger became the Squire, and he married a good and loving wife, and they have many children; but the youngest of them all they have given to me.

"Another Dorothy Neville, and they say just like I was. I do not know that, but I do know she is very lovely, with the brightest hair, the bluest eyes, and skin like May-blossoms.

"There are so many of them at the Grange that I have a tiny house near the town, and Dorothy loves to be with me always.

"Of Sir Hugo Howard we hear at times. He has been, men say, a great soldier, and won many honors; but he is not happy. He married a fair bride, and son after son, daughter after daughter, have been born to him, and died as if there were a curse upon them, and only one son is alive now.

"There was a grand ball given at a great house near the town, and my Dorothy was bidden to it.

"I thought to have taken her to it, but I took a catarrh, and had to relinquish her to the escort of some friends.

"Fashions are much changed since my day, but my darling looked like a picture in her white dress, with forget-me-nots in her golden hair. I would not let her hide it with powder, though it was worn by modish ladies.

"She came home next day, and told me of all her partners with merry jests, till she named 'Mr. Charles Howard,' when she stirred the name over just a little, and her eyes shone with a strange brightness.

"'Who is Mr. Howard?' I asked.

"Now, Dorothy knew not my story—it was an old tale now—so she answered with no hesitation:

"'Sir Hugo Howard's son of Ashmead Park.'

"And she blushed like a rose in June.

"He was the son, then, of my enemy, and I would be revenged if he loved her; and how could he help it? She was a child, I thought, and she would forget, though I had never forgotten.

"A few days later he came to pay his respects, as he said, to his father's old friend.

"A fair, handsome young man, and so terribly like his uncle.

"I saw he was madly in love with Dorothy, and I planned to take her away.

"So I told her father I would like to visit our relations in London before I grew too old to travel, for often they wished to see some of us. He marvelled rather, but gave his consent to Dorothy's going.

"I never told her of a letter I got from Mr. Howard, telling me he loved my Dorothy, and praying me to further his suit.

"Perhaps she thought he would speak later, or perhaps she deemed him fickle, for she gave no sign.

"My pretty one had several suitors, but somehow they pleased her not at all; and I was too tender to force her into a marriage, though no doubt it would have been my duty, for young damsels were more submissive to the will of other guardians then than now, when every year seems to render them more malapert; and when the child looked at me with her pretty eyes, I could not cross her.

"And I tried to believe 'twas only that she was so childlike, and the fair sights and doings of London had turned her head.

"So, though I sighed sometimes for the sweet country meadows and lanes, I could not but enjoy all the novelties of London. But soon we had no heart for more junketing, for Cousin Gilbert's eldest son, a fine personable young man, was an officer, and he was ordered to the wars, and my child's favorite brother, little curly-haired Willie, hardly more than a boy, was in his regiment.

"Ah! weary on the wars! The Duke of Marlborough is a great man, and has won glory for us all; but he could not give back the boys to their mothers, and the grooms to their brides, when they lay stark in their blood-stained graves after a battle.

"The troops were to start from London, so Cousin Gilbert would go to see them march through the docks, and we all went too.

"It was a grand sight, though sad, to see all those brave men, with drums beating, colors flying, and horses prancing, as they marched by. No wonder the crowd cheered, and women rained tears and flowers on them as they passed.

"Presently Gilbert marched by, and our Willie carried the colors, looking as pleased as if he were going bird's-nesting in the Church Pasture.

"Then I felt Dorothy give a little start and quiver, and there came Charles Howard, pale and haggard, with sad eyes, but holding himself erect, like a gallant gentleman and officer.

"There was a poor girl just then swooned in the crowd, a bride, they said, with her husband among the soldiers; and I was trying to aid her a little, when close beside me I saw the face of Sir Hugo. Changed as he was, I knew him, and he me, for he caught my wrist, and said bitterly:

"'Where is the false girl that I may heap curses on her? She who drove my son to go to his doom; my last, my only dear child!'

"Dorothy was busying herself with a weeping child, and her back was to him, so he saw her not, luckily. I answered boldly:

"'Sir Hugo, 'twas I came between him and her. Why should I have mercy on your son? I was spared no suffering in my youth.'

"He blanched a little, and would have answered, but I said:

"'Go to your wife, Sir Hugo; tell her what I have told you, and why I will have vengeance—or shall I tell her?'

"'I have no wife,' he cried. 'She is dead—dead!'

"And he thrust his way through the crowd, with a face like that of a man in the death throes.

"Soon after, my darling and I returned home. Her mother would have her home with the others, and gave her camomile tea, with ground ivy steeped in it; but she said she was well, and prayed to return to me.

"It seemed a weary while till we heard of the great Battle of Blenheim, and then that Gilbert and our Willie were safe. The latter had been wounded, but was saved by another officer, at the risk of his life, and at the cost of sore hurts to himself; but we heard not his name, though I think it mattered little, as we could remember him in our prayers just as well.

"It was a dreary night in autumn. The rain beat against the shutters, and the wind howled sadly in the chimneys.

"In came Sir Hugo, travel-stained, and sore distressed. He caught my hand, and grasped it, saying:

"'Dorothy Neville, twice have I pleaded for your love as a man pleads for his life. Once more I am your suppliant.'

"I gazed at him in amazement. Surely the man was beside himself. Could he want my love when we were both white-haired.

"'What do you mean?' I cried quite angrily.

"'Dorothy,' he said, 'my son, my one darling, is dying. You alone can save him. Will you not even now have pity?'

"'Pity died in my heart on what should have been my bridal day.' I said, coldly. 'What ails your son, Sir Hugo, and what have I to do with his malady?'

"Sir Hugo poured forth piteously how Charles had been shot in the chest in saving our Willie, which startled me, for letters were lost often, and we did not know who had succored him. But the doctors thought Charles Howard was falling into a wasting decline, as his mother had done.

"So Sir Hugo had traveled night and day to win my consent to his marriage with Dorothy, knowing well she was as much or more my child than her father's, for in truth I had adopted her, as it were.

"But my heart was cold to him as a stone for all his pleading, till he said:

"'You are cruel as ever, Dorothy Neville; but I will go to your niece myself, though she be kept from me by bolts and bars.'

"'Go to her,' I replied coldly, 'and I will accompany you, and tell her how your brother died.'

"'You cannot,' he returned, defiantly; 'no one knows.'

"'Sit down, Sir Hugo, and listen,' I said; and with my eyes fixed on him I told him my dream, and saw him writhe as if he were on the rack, till, able to bear no more, he cried out:

"'This is the hand of Providence; hush! hush! for Heaven's sake!'—

"And burst into tears; but I was merciless, and pressing my advantage, bade him confess. Then, vanquished at last, he told how he had bribed a servant to feign illness, and personate him abroad, and how he came secretly home to see how things went.

"And when he found I hated him the more, he wandered forth, like Cain, till a young, innocent girl took pity on him in illness, and when he mended, married him.

"And she also died heart-broken by her sorrow; and now his son was slipping from his agonized grasp too. And so prayed that I would not give him into the hands of the law until Charles was buried, swearing that if I would have pity so far, he would but lay him in his grave, and come and deliver himself straight, with full confession, to the officers of justice, for death even by execution would be welcome.

"I gave him no answer for a while, as he sat before me with bent head, his face hidden in his hands.

"The purpose of a life-time is hard to relinquish, and I had wearied Heaven with prayers that my enemy might be delivered into my hand, and so my supplication was granted, and I strove to triumph over him; but it seemed to me that Charles, my own Charles, was pleading with me for mercy on him, in that he had suffered so much, and was brought so low; and laying my hand on his shoulder I said, 'Sir Hugo, may Heaven forgive you all, as I do, and for a sign that your peace is made, and your guilt pardoned, may your son be given back to you from the very gates of death, Dorothy shall be his.'"

* * * * * *

Colonel Nelthorpe's well-modulated voice ceased; he looked up with a smile; his audience, who had been deeply interested in the narrative, gave a few exclamations; and Lady Howard, whose bright eyes were dimmed with tears, said:

"Oh, is that all? It was almost too painful. I fancied as you read that someone was stealing out of the darkness to stab Charlie. Can it be really true?"

"Was anyone really and truly murdered in this room?"

"Old Mrs. Thomas vouches for the fact," said Colonel Nelthorpe. "The story seems to have been handed down in the servants' hall, and the crime, she declares, remained as an unravelled mystery, though there is some tradition that the murdered man's ghost appeared to his bride elect, and told her who was the murderer."

"I declare you are shivering, Maude," cried her husband. "Come along back, child; we have had ghosts and murders enough for once."

Ten minutes after, they were waltzing to the strains of a brilliant, inspiriting arrangement from the last operetta. Maude whispered to her husband, as she floated round the hall in his arms:

"Charlie, I would never have forgotten Sir Hugo had I been Dorothy Neville; I would have revenged myself."

"I am sure you would, my dear," laughed Sir Charles. "A little woman who cannot slap her kitten when it steals the cream out of the jug, would certainly have carried out the vendetta in style. But, after all, by now

" 'Their bones are dust, their good swords rust,
And their souls are with the saints, we trust.' "

"Are you going to play for us, Miss Lister? Then, Lady Howard, may I hope for the next dance?"

Scientific and Useful.

DATING EGGS.—An inventor proposes to arrange a rubber stamp in the nest of every hen, with a movable date. An electric disc is arranged so that when the hen has laid an egg her foot touches it, and the stamp turns over on the ink pad, and then revolves, stamping the date on the egg. The dates tell their own story.

SOLIDIFYING PETROLEUM.—A chemist in charge of experiments made for the Russian Government to find a method for solidifying petroleum, has reported a successful plan. It consists in heating the oil, and then adding from 1 to 3 per cent. of soap. The soap dissolves in the hot oil, which, on cooling, solidifies to a kind of tallow. The tallow burns slowly without smoke, but develops a great deal of heat, and leaves about 2 per cent. of a residuum.

BEAMS AND JOISTS.—The strength of beams is in direct proportion to their thickness, inversely as their length and as the squares of their depth, thus: A joist four inches thick is twice as strong as a two-inch joist; if twelve feet in length it has double the strength of one twenty-four feet, while doubling the depth, as from six to twelve inches, increases the strength fourfold. It is assumed, of course, that all other elements of strength in each instance of comparison are the same.

SPIDERS.—A Swiss *savant* claims that spiders perform an important part in the preservation of forests by defending the trees against the depredations of aphides and insects. He has examined a great many spiders, both in their viscera and by feeding them in captivity, and has found them to be voracious destroyers of these pests; and he believes that the spiders in a particular forest do more effective work of this kind than all the insect-eating birds that inhabit it.

THE SPARROW.—Here is the way they make sparrows useful in Germany: Long troughs, placed at the eaves of the houses, are occupied by sparrows in building their nests. When the young are hatched and the mother goes out to procure food, wire screens are placed over them, with interstices large enough to permit the passage of food in to the younglings but too small to allow them to escape. As soon as they become plump they are killed, and make a desirable article of food.

CANDLE-POWER.—The measuring of the candle-power of a light is accomplished by comparing the shadow cast by a rod in the light of a standard candle with the shadow cast by the light to be tested. By moving the latter towards or away from the rod a point will be reached at which the shadow cast by both lights will be of the same intensity. The intensity of the two lights is directly proportioned to the squares of their distance from the shadows, i.e., suppose the light to be tested is three times the distance of the candle, its illuminative power is three times as great.

Farm and Garden.

CRANBERRIES.—It is claimed that when cranberries are frozen hard, and then suddenly thawed by pouring boiling water over them, the acid is partially converted into grape sugar, and they will be of better flavor and require much less sugar for seasoning.

SEEDS.—The winter is the time to procure the necessary garden seeds for the spring. If delayed until the planting season opens the seeds may not reach you in time owing to the demand. This is also an excellent time for assorting the seeds and selecting only the best.

WASTE.—Manure gradually depreciates by keeping under the very best management, gaining in water and losing in valuable organic matter, which is spent in the fermentation. How, then, must it waste and lose under the ordinary exposure in a yard subject to excessive heating and washing by rains?

THE PIGS.—In the same litter of pigs some will be larger than others. Some will fatten readily, while others just as thrifty will grow long and large in frame with less fat. These last, whether male or female, should be reserved for breeding. Feed has something to do with this, but individual peculiarities of different animals has quite as much.

SWAMP AND MARSH.—It is estimated that the area of unreclaimed swamp and marsh land in the United States that can be drained and brought under cultivation is equal to that of all the cultivated lands, or nearly 300,000,000 acres. Much of this land could be reclaimed without great difficulty or expense, and would make farm land of great value.

SOILS.—Soils vary, and this is an important matter to be considered. Crops that thrive best on certain soils will be failures on others. The first step is to change the character of the soil by drainage or by the application of lime. To render heavy soils light cannot be done in a single season, and the work should not be omitted each year.

SHEEP.—One great difficulty that has existed in sheep-raising is that of supposing the sheep should be partially fed by picking over the old fields and foraging through the woods. To make sheep pay as they should they require care and attention like other stock, and the introduction of superior mutton breeds has given sheep a higher standing on the farm and calls for better management.

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TO FRIENDS AND READERS.

We hope that those of our friends and readers who are kindly in the habit of getting up clubs for THE POST, will enter the field as soon as possible this year and try at least to double their old lists. We also hope our readers who have not heretofore sent us a club will try to do so now.

We wish to get a great many more clubs for the coming year, and trust every one of our present subscribers will make an extra effort to secure one or more new friends for us.

THE POST is much lower in price than any other first-class family paper in the country, and we think it only needs to be laid before the community to be subscribed for at once by thousands to whom it may still be a stranger, save, perhaps, by reputation. Of course we must depend in a great degree upon our present subscribers, friends and readers to show THE POST to their acquaintances and neighbors, and to speak a good word in our behalf. Their return for such efforts must be the pleasure they give to others, the consciousness of assisting in the good work of circulating THE POST, and enabling us to make it better, more useful and entertaining than ever before. Will they try and do it for us? Let each of our present friends and subscribers try to get one new subscriber at least.

Sample copies for the purpose will be sent to those who wish them.

Starting Anew.

As it is bound to happen, no matter how affairs in general may go, the arrival of another New Year is an additional milestone upon the great highway of Time. And in passing it by to start anew on the road towards its successor, it may well remind us of the course gone over, and render us thoughtful of that which is to come.

Both duty and sound judgment make it fitting that at all times we should work earnestly and heartily for the best; but it would seem we are for the most part so much the creatures of habit that resolutions made and actions formed for or from some certain occasion or circumstance, are always strongest.

It may not do our powers of reasoning or intellectual strength much credit that it is so, but we appear inclined to think that a new determination to do better, begin life with nobler impulses, or change from some old-time line of conduct, will lack the necessary force unless dated by some particular season or memorable event. This peculiarity certainly looks like a relic of ancient superstition, concerning the sanctity of omens that influences us almost against our wills.

New Year's and Christmas therefore have been regarded as the most suitable periods for this reorganization of habits and purposes—this reconsecration of heart and hand for the work of life. Then, far beyond all other times, the soul is brought in contact with grander feelings and more human sympathies. The spirits of love and charity, predominant in everything we see and hear, in voice, lips and eye, as well as the thousand and one inanimate objects that speak the glorious language of the season, awake in the bosom desires and acts of good that only need the firm grasp of resolution to make blessed guides and guardians for the future.

There can be no question that if the heart justly profits by the lessons it may now learn, and obeys its fresh found purposes, its daily beating will be joyfully quickened by deeds done to last forever.

The period that custom has set apart for the holidays may pass, and its sweet influences leave many as cold and strange to the great world's needs as it found them; but those who, with the New Year, start forth on a new road to duty will always recognise its true worth. They will see the necessity of crowding, perhaps, no less indulgence, no less kindness, no less charity and love in this one corner of the year, but the need also of spreading some throughout the rest of the calendar. They will see that everyone can well use all the kindness and good he is likely to receive in this world, and that it would seem almost more like a fashionable folly, than a noble trait of character, to bestow affection and charity there, where, the holidays gone, indifference, selfishness and all uncharitableness come again to dwell for another twelve-month.

But let us hope that the present New Year brings with it the best impulses of which the heart is capable towards ourselves and others, with grace and fortune to carry them out; for it is only thus that the season will have crowned us with its full reward.

As familiar conversation, wherein men do express their minds and affections mutually, breedeth acquaintance and cherisheth good-will of men to one another; but long forbearance thereof dissolveth or slackeneth the bonds of amity, breaking their intimacy and cooling their kindness; so is it in respect to God; it is frequent converse with Him which begetteth a particular acquaintance with Him, a mindful regard of Him, a hearty liking to Him, a delightful taste of His goodness, and consequently a sincere and solid good-will toward Him; but intermission thereof produceth estrangement or enmity toward Him.

THE common fluency of speech in many men and most women is owing to a scarcity of matter and a scarcity of words, for whoever is master of language and has a mind full of ideas will be apt in speaking to hesitate upon the choice of both; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas and one set of words to clothe them in; and these are always ready at the mouth; so people come faster out of a church when it is almost empty than when a crowd is at the door.

Vanity is so anchored in the heart of man that a soldier, sutler, cook, street porter vapor and wish to have their admirers; and philosophers even wish the same. And those who write against it wish to have the glory of having written well; and those who read it wish to have the glory of having read well; and I, who write this, have perhaps this desire; and perhaps those who will read this.

METHOD is essential and enables a larger amount of work to be got through with satisfaction. "Method," said Cecil, "is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much again as a bad one." Cecil's despatch of business was extraordinary; his maxim being, "The shortest way to do many things is to do only one thing at once."

BEFORE men we stand as opaque bee hives. They can see the thoughts go in and out of us; but what work they do inside of a man they cannot tell. Before God we are as glass bee hives, and all that our thoughts are doing within us He perfectly sees and understands.

AS THE rays come from the sun, and yet are not the sun, even so our love and pity, though they are not God, but merely a poor, weak image and reflection of Him, yet from Him alone they come. If there is mercy in our hearts, it comes from the fountain of mercy. If there is the light of love in us, it is a ray from the full sun of his love.

It is an undoubted truth that the less one has to do the less one finds time to do it in. One yawns, one procrastinates, one can do it when one will, and therefore one seldom does it at all; whereas those who have a great deal of business must, to use a vulgar expression, buckle to it; and then they always find time enough to do it.

A tender-hearted and compassionate disposition, which inclines men to pity and feel the misfortunes of others, and which is, even for its own sake, incapable of involving any man in ruin and misery, is of all tempers of mind the most amiable; and though it seldom receive much honor, is worthy of the highest.

ALL that a man does outwardly is but the expression and completion of his inward thought. To work effectually, he must think clearly; to act nobly, he must think nobly. Intellectual force is a principal element of the soul's life, and should be proposed by every man as the principal end of his being.

Poverty is, except where there is an actual want of food and raiment, a thing much more imaginary than real. The shame of poverty,—the shame of being thought poor,—is a great and fatal weakness, though arising in this country, from the fashion of the times themselves.

Wooden frames are put under the arches of a bridge, to remain no longer than till the latter are consolidated. Even so some pleasures are the Devil's scaffolding to build a habit upon; that formed and steady, the pleasures are sent for fire-wood, and the hell begins in this life.

It is not poverty so much as pretence that harasses a ruined man,—the struggle between a proud mind and an empty purse,—the keeping up a hollow show that must soon come to an end. Have the courage to appear poor, and you disarm poverty of its sharpest sting.

WRITERS of every age have endeavored to show that pleasure is in us, and not in the object offered for our amusement. If the soul be happily disposed, everything becomes capable of affording entertainment, and distress will almost want a name.

Were I to be angry at men being fools, I could here find ample room for declamation; but, alas! I have been a fool myself; and why should I be angry with them for being something so natural to every child of humanity?

Whenever our neighbor's house is on fire, it cannot be amiss for the engines to play a little on our own. Better to be despised for too anxious apprehensions than ruined by too confident a security.

The pleasures of the world are deceitful; they promise more than they give. They trouble us in seeking them, they do not satisfy us when possessing them, and they make us despair in losing them.

THERE is scarcely any man, how much soever he may despise the character of a flatterer, but will condescend in the meanest manner to flatter himself.

PRUDENCE is that virtue by which we discern what is proper to be done under the various circumstances of time and place.

CORRECTION does much, but encouragement does more. Encouragement after censure is as the sun after a shower.

I CANNOT help suspecting that those who abuse themselves are, in reality, angling for approbation.

I HAVE lived to know that the secret of happiness is, never to allow your energies to stagnate.

The World's Happenings.

Vermont still pays a bounty on foxes.

At Hong Kong thieves steal the telephone wires.

New York city has 335 churches and 10,000 saloons.

Five colored men have been elected to the Texas Legislature.

It is estimated London's flower trade amounts to $25,000 a day.

Persons near Burgettstown, this State, hunt rabbits with ferrets.

Lansing, Mich., physicians have combined to protect themselves from bad plays.

Fifty three persons, under sentence of death, are confined in the Kansas Penitentiary.

A Swiss has invented a musical box which introduces the human voice and also the trill of birds.

An Iowa boy got locked up in an ice-box for 14 hours, and his teeth chattered until they were worn half down.

The wife of a farmer named Dufort, at Masanche, P. Q., has given birth to her thirtieth child. She has been married 31 years.

The Supreme Court of New Hampshire has decided that "a party owning the bank of a river owns to the middle of the stream."

A colored man found $16 000 in greenbacks between the leaves of an old book he had bought at a second-hand store at Paris, Ky.

Farmers in New Hampshire are this season shipping their apples direct to Liverpool, England, and are obtaining satisfactory prices.

Seven ounces of metal (nails, tacks, hairpins and a silver dollar) were found in the stomach of a cow slaughtered on the Pacific Coast.

An Indiana woman who had a beautiful head of hair sold it, and with part of the proceeds at once invested in a complete set of "switches" and "front pieces."

A retired merchant, aged 83, of Providence, and a Boston widow just one year his junior, were married recently, the couple having met for the first time only 3 weeks before.

Ingenious San Diego, Cal., thieves broke into a saloon, rolled a barrel of whisky against the outside wall, and then, boring a hole through the wall and barrel, drew off the liquor into buckets.

A Texan, it is said, has discovered how to control sex unerringly in the breeding of animals, not only the uniparous but also the multiparous, so that "young things" may be bred to order.

A lamp to charm the unsuspecting student is a copper serpent with silvery scales on its rough back and tail, which coils its writhing length into a ring and lifts its flat head to vomit out flames.

While a girl in Bridgeport, Conn., was jumping rope she became exhausted, and falling through a cellar window, had her eyes so severely cut by the broken glass that her sight was totally destroyed.

The liquor law is being so vigorously enforced in Manchester, N. H., that dealers are compelled to carry their stock in their pockets, where it is safe, as the law does not admit of the searching of a person.

An elevator in a New Hampshire factory stopped suddenly, the engineer having shut off the steam, and the lad who was riding on it became so frightened lest it should fall that he was attacked with heart disease and died.

The Paris Prefect of Police has bought a wooden horse, harnessed, and all candidates for cabmen must show that they know how to harness and unharness it, and pass an examination on whatever other tests the Prefect may impose.

The French mint will soon replace the copper sous with nickels. Singularly enough the five and ten centime pieces will be perforated in the centre after the manner of Chinese sous. This enables them to be strung and counted or handled with great ease.

The scholars in the Norwich, Conn., public schools were each requested to give their teachers, on a recent date, either a potato or an apple for distribution to the poor. The result was that ten barrels of the vegetable and fruit desired were divided among the poor.

An employe at a hotel in Denver confessed to the larceny of small sums and was sent to jail; but the bills continued to disappear. Subsequently a mouse nest was found, and the currency used in its construction, added to that known to have been stolen, balanced the books.

In Washington Territory lately a hunter jumped a fox and started in chase with his dog. During the chase a wildcat started up and headed the procession. The race came to a sudden termination, for, as the story goes, dog, cat and fox were all killed by a train as they were crossing a railroad track.

A Petaluma, Cal., woman missed her newspaper for several days in succession, and as the carrier declared he had served it, she decided to watch for the thief. The latter turned out to be a dog. The moment the carrier disappeared from sight the canine would seize the paper in its mouth and dart off.

Quill toothpicks come largely from France, which possesses the largest factory in the world. This factory, which is located near Paris, was originally started to make quill pens; but, when these went out of use, the proprietor turned it into a tooth-pick mill, the present annual output of which is 24,000,000.

A San Francisco grocery firm were in the habit of putting the residuary cash at night in a bag and depositing it in the oatmeal barrel. The other day a small boy called early for some oatmeal, and one of the firm served him, giving him along with the meal about $140. Since that time the San Francisco newspapers have been printing advertisements offering a liberal reward to the boy if he would call at the store. At last accounts the boy hadn't called.

IN THE SPIRIT.

BY LOUISE MALCOM STENTON.

My brother's spirit hovers o'er me,
And oft whispers in my ear,
Sweet words of tender sympathy,
And paternal loving cheer.

His weary feet tread golden streets,
His dear lips chant angels' songs,
His broken heart finds rest for aye,
And in Heaven forgets its wrongs.

O, brother mine, look down on me!
Let thy spirit hand clasp mine,
And lead me safe with thee to dwell
Amid mysteries divine!

Thy pure and gentle soul on earth
Ne'er could find a place to rest,
And so returned to God above,
There to seek thy Saviour's breast.

The Legion of Honor.

BY GEORGIANA FULLERTON.

"WHAT can be keeping Marie this evening? She is not usually so late."

The speaker was a youth of about twenty years of age, of average height, with dark hair and eyes, and a sallow complexion. His wide, open brow betokened talent, and both mouth and chin showed determination.

It was a face pleasant to look at, and which attracted attention; and yet no one would for a moment have thought of calling Eustace Decourt handsome.

As he stood at the corner of one of the principal streets in Rouen, shading his eyes from the western sun, the side-door of a large shop at a little distance was opened abruptly, and a number of young girls, varying in age, height, and looks, poured out gladly and gaily, rejoicing that their day's work was over.

Two or three among them gave the young man a nod or smile of recognition, and a few threw him a coquettish glance as he turned and watched them with evident attention until they were out of sight. So preoccupied was he that he failed to hear a soft footstep beside him, and started violently as a hand was laid upon his arm.

"Did I frighten you? It was fun to find you watching them so intently. I crept up quietly behind you on purpose."

"Mischievous as ever, Marie! Well, I had almost given you up, and began to think I must have missed you in the crowd."

"Not a bit of it, Sir; you were looking to see which you would fix upon to have a walk with in my place."

"Of course, as there isn't one of them I don't prefer to you," answered Eustace, laughing, and looking down into the girl's merry black eyes. "But what has been keeping you all this time?"

"Am I late? Have you been waiting long?"

"Ever since the Cathedral clock chimed six."

"And now it is half-past; but, Eustace, how ailly of you! Don't you remember I told you that Monsieur le Maire's daughter is going to be married next week?"

"What has that to do with my having stood here for the last half-hour?"

"Why, you foolish boy, a great deal. Mademoiselle's trousseau has to be finished, and so many orders besides have come in these last few days, that we are working extra time. I consider myself a model of punctuality. Dismissed, and immediately by your side, what more do you want?

"Nothing at this moment," exclaimed the young man, as he linked the girl's arm in his. "But now, where shall we go—to the Jardin des Plantes?"

She shook her head.

"Shall we have a climb up St. Catherine's Mount? The view will be splendid this evening."

"No, we will go towards the river."

It was the end of a beautiful summer's day as these two took their way slowly through the old streets of Rouen.

The light breeze that fanned their cheeks was soft and perfumed, for the heat and the glare were no more, since the sun had nearly accomplished its day's work, and was sinking down to rest in a glory of red and gold, while long, soft cloudlets of grey and pink were stretched across the deep blue sky.

Out in the country the voice of Nature was hushed, as though bidding her children rest, and the peace and calm of the evening hour were only broken by the sweet warble of a bird or the distant lowing of cattle; but in the town there was as yet no cessation of the sounds of toil, only they receded more and into the distance as the principal streets were quitted for less frequented ones.

"Isn't it lovely this evening, Eustace? We must have many more walks before the summer is quite gone. How fast it is passing away, though! Here we are at the end of August already."

"And when September comes, I shall be going away."

He spoke abruptly, as if unwilling to make the announcement.

"Going away! Where to?"

"To Paris, Marie, in order to study to become a doctor."

"Then you have really made up your mind to leave dear old Rouen?"

"It was made up long ago. You know how often we have talked about it together; and now at last my father has consented. I have talent, and am determined to carve out a career for myself.

"Your father is disappointed, of course; he was so anxious that you should carry on his own business."

"And spend all my days in a small bookseller's shop in Rouen."

"Which would be much nicer, I should think, than working in a hospital and seeing all sorts of horrid sights."

"You don't understand, Marie, in the very least, all I feel. From a boy my heart has been set upon the study of medicine. I think it a grand work to assuage suffering, to endeavor to preserve life; to follow the march of progress, to climb the ladder to eminence and fame by means of that talent of which you feel yourself the possessor."

"You are ridiculously ambitious and enthusiastic, and I don't believe you care one bit about going away," cried Marie, petulantly.

For all answer, her companion placed his hands upon her shoulders, and looked down steadily and earnestly into the girl's clouded face.

"Don't you? But if I tell that it will nearly break my heart to go because I must leave you, what heed will you take, Marie?"

"None," she cried, breaking into rippling laughter; "because your career is of far more worth to you than me. Oh, Eustace! I have hurt you; forgive me."

"You are as variable as an April day—first tears and then smiles. Just now I thought you were a little bit sorry and vexed at the thought of my going away."

"And so I am. Only think how I shall miss you! Ever since we were small children, we have been together. You are just like a brother to me."

"But I want to be more than a brother to you, Marie, for I love you very, very, dearly, and have always since you were quite a little thing. It is as much my ambition to win you as it is to make a name for myself."

She shrank a little farther from him, and faltered out something about their being too poor, and too young.

"Quite true, as things are now," he replied. "But some day I shall return from Paris with the prospect of a career before me, and then I shall hope to win you for my own."

"I could not leave my poor mother alone. It is so little she can do for herself, crippled with rheumatism as she is. My wages are good, now that I am one of the first hands at Madame Le Roy's, or we should be badly off indeed."

"Suppose I have enough for you both?"

"Ah, well, that is all in the future. Let us leave it to look after itself, and enjoy ourself in the present. Patience, Eustace, patience. Perhaps some day—— But how can I tell?" she added, laughing, and shaking her pretty head.

"But at any rate you will wish me success, won't you?"

"With all my heart. I hope you will live to be a great man, Eustace. Perhaps you will even be decorated some day."

He shook his head, smiling, nevertheless. She had unwittingly touched on the height of his ambition.

"You will have forgotten all about me by then?"

"Never!" he exclaimed, with a sudden vehemence. "You image will always be before me, however much I may have to toil and strive. To win your love is my first ambition, to make a name in the world is only second to that."

For all response, she hummed a distracting little air, and looked so enchanting that Eustace Decourt longed, then and there, to take her in his arms, and pour out all his heart's deepest feelings; but he knew they would be wasted words as yet, and surely one day his patient devotion would be rewarded.

"I love old Rouen," exclaimed Marie, as late that summer's evening Eustace escorted her homewards; and her cry has been re-echoed by many a traveller who has paid a visit to the fine old Gothic town.

As one passes along the streets the form of a pointed arch, or the mutilated statue of some saint, together with the many buildings, ornamented and intersected with rich carvings and strange or grotesque devices, bear one in imagination away to the far past.

What memories are conjured up as one wanders through the great Cathedral, or gazes upon the statue of Jeanne d'Arc in the market-place!

And who can fail to admire the handiwork of those whose tools have long been silent, but who have left enduring tokens of their skill in carved stonework which, resembling the finest lace, fronts the Church of Saint Maclou?

The August days were ended, and the fields round Rouen had been shorn of their wealth of golden corn when Eustace Decourt quitted his native place for the gay capital of France. And the weeks lengthened into months, and the months rolled silently round, until five years had passed away.

Success had at last begun to smile upon him; his great talent had secured recognition, and he had every prospect of attaining eminence in the medical profession. Now he felt he should be justified in claiming the reward of his perseverance, and would endeavor to persuade the girl to whom he had so long been devotedly attached to consider his proposals in all earnestness.

During his absence he had heard constantly from Marie, and in the brief visits which he had paid to the scene of his childhood she had always gladly welcomed him; but as yet her heart was untouched, and she entertained for Eustace no warmer feeling than the most sincere sisterly affection, though at times she almost succeeded in deceiving herself into the belief that it was otherwise.

The death of her mother, which had occured rather more than four years after her old playmate's departure from Rouen, had led to the Decourts offering her the shelter of their home, and Marie had consented to avail herself temporarily of their kindness, but would not yield to their entreaties to reside always with them, for her independence of character revolted at the bare idea of becoming a burden to anyone, but especially to them.

Matters stood thus when the long hot summer days came again, and Marie, received an invitation to visit some distant relatives near Tours.

She feared at first that she could not be spared by her employer; but Madame Le Roy knew that she had been greatly tried by her sad loss, and felt sure that change and rest would benefit the girl, who had begun to droop and look pale in the July heat.

To Eustace the residence of Marie with his parents was a great satisfaction, and he smiled when he read that, on her return from Tours, it was her intention to try and prevail upon them to let her make other arrangements.

His annual visit home had been at once postponed for a few weeks, as soon as he learned that she would be absent from Rouen. Meanwhile, he had given himself up to many a delightful day-dream with regard to the future.

It wanted only a day or so to the time of his departure from Paris for his well-earned holiday, to which he was looking forward this year with more than usual hope and eagerness, when, coming in one evening from a long and hard day's work, he found a letter awaiting him from his father. He opened it leisurely, his thoughts still dwelling upon a difficult case he had in hand, and as he turned it over his eye fell on the following paragraph:—

"You will be surprised to hear that your almost sister, Marie Leblanc, is about to be married to a young fellow she has met in Tours. His name is Gaspard Antin, and we understand that he is in a good business in Paris."

With a low moan, Eustace Decourt sank into a chair; and as he buried his face in his hands, the stormy waves of his first great trouble closed around him.

Vanished was the bright dream of his boyhood, crushed for ever the hope of his youth; grey and hard stretched before him the remaining years of his life!

Throughout the hours of that night there was not only darkness without, but the blackness of bitter disappointment reigned in the young doctor's heart.

Some sorrows there are which, after a short, sharp conflict, yield a deep sense of peace; others in which the fight is prolonged throughout many a weary hour when the abyss of despair yawns black and deep beneath our feet, and the heavens above are as adament through which our cry falls apparently to pass.

The first faint streaks of the early summer dawn found Eustace Decourt still in the same position.

Higher and higher in the east crept the great ball of fire, bathing each object in light as it travelled on, and suffusing the whole sky with a glorious mass of crimson.

The city sparrow awoke to life again, and one, more bold than the rest, crept close to the window and gaily chirruped its matin lay.

The sound roused the troubled inmate of that room. He rose hastily, threw open the casement, and, leaning out, drank in the sweetness of the early day. As he gazed at the gorgeous hues of the breaking dawn, and beheld the city gradually awakening to the toil of a new day, Eustace Decourt realised that the whole aspect of life was changed for him.

Deprived of the sweet hope which had been his solace in many a weary hour, his whole being henceforth, he resolved, should be devoted to his profession; and, as the aromatic leaf yields a sweeter fragrance when crushed, so the ambitions of this young doctor rose gradually to a nobler height, since no longer did his own personal advancement only continue to be the end and object of his work and life. It was displaced slowly, but surely, by the sublimer and grander aim, the welfare of others.

* * * * * *

It was New Year's Eve in the days of the Second Empire—a glorious, bright, frosty night; and among the many passers-by who thronged the streets of Paris hurried a tall pale woman of some thirty years. Onward, still onward, with rapid motion and intent purpose, until she reached a lonelier part of the great city, and the walls of a children's hospital rose before her. Soon she had gained admittance within its portals, and was hanging over one of the many little white beds in a long ward, with eyes for none but the small form before her.

"I sent for you, Marie, though it was so late because your child is not as well now as he was this afternoon."

It was the young house physician who spoke, and the tones of his voice sounded jagged and weary, for, owing to a terrible outbreak of diphtheria not very far from that quarter of Paris, which had filled the hospital to overflowing, he had been unusually hard-worked for weeks.

"But you do not think——"

The mother paused. The words would not come, but she raised an appealing face which spoke volumes to Monsieur Decourt's.

"No one can say positively. The attack is a severe one, but we must not give up hope. If he gets through to-night, it will be greatly in his favor."

"He is my only one," she murmured, sadly. "It is hard, and Gaspard away, too."

"You have written to him?"

"Yes, directly Henri was taken ill I wrote; he has got the letter by now."

Then, as the recollection swept over her of how their home had been brightened by the baby voice and pattering feet, Madame Antin hid her face in her hands and sobbed aloud.

"Do not give way like this," exclaimed Monsieur Decourt, laying his hand firmly on her shoulder; "you will disturb the child."

His appeal to her motherly instinct had the desired effect, as he knew it would. Then, as she became more composed, he passed to another bed, gave some directions to the nursing sister, and left the ward.

"A few moments of fresh air will make a new man of me," he remarked, half aloud; and, suiting the action to his words, he stepped outside, and, lifting his hat, he allowed the cool, fresh breeze to sweep across his broad, white forehead.

How quiet it all was, and what a glorious night! The moon was sailing calmly across the cloudless, star-bespangled sky from tower to steeple; the clanging chimes were proclaiming the near approach of midnight mingling their sweet tones with the din of the great city, which was borne on the ear from afar, like the roar of the distant ocean.

There was a ball at the Tuileries that night, and as Eustace Decourt stood drinking in the purer atmosphere his thoughts travelled to that scene of splendor and gaiety of which the beautiful Empress Eugenie, whom he had many a time received within those hospital walls, was the life and centre. What a contrast to the sufferings so near at hand!

As in a dream, he beheld the brilliant throng crowding the splendid suite of rooms stately dames and courtiers, grave Ambassadors and beautiful maidens, Ministers of State, officers, and civilians.

There abounded lovely toilettes, gay uniforms, and sparkling jewels; there too were medals and decorations in profusion, and Eustace Decourt felt well-nigh envious of those distinguished ones who were privileged to wear the Legion of Honor.

"How long ago it seems!" he suddenly exclaimed, for the current of his thoughts had changed, and once again in memory he was walking by Marie's side through the streets of Rouen, under the summer sky, and he almost seemed to hear her voice giving expression to his great ambition.

Yes, he had loved her well and truly, in those days gone by—how deeply she had never known, and he had scarcely realised until he heard of her engagement to Gaspard Antin.

Strange that the acquaintance of a few weeks should have succeeded in awakening the love which all his devotion of years had failed to arouse! Long enough it had been before he could summon courage to go and see Marie in her new home, when, after her marriage from his father's house at Rouen, she and her husband had settled in Paris.

Nor had Marie ever known cause to repent of having given her heart to Gaspard Antin, the only drawback to the complete happiness of her married life being that his business obliged him to take frequent journeys to Vienna and other Continental towns, which left her somewhat lonely at time, until the little Henri came, and was the pride and joy of both father and mother, besides being the great comfort of the latter when her husband was absent.

And now was Marie also to be called upon to drain the cup of trouble to the dregs? Was she to be purified by suffering, as he had said? Not so, if aught that he could do might avail to prolong her child's life; and as Eustace Decourt gazed upward to the star-lighted firmament a psalm of thanksgiving rose from his heart, not only for the great talent which was his, but also for that darkest hour of his life, since it had been the means of changing the shackles of self-interest and emotion into the silken fetters of love and labor for others.

The chimes rang out the hour of midnight, and aroused the doctor from his day dreams.

He hastily re-entered the hospital, and as he passed into the ward where Marie Antin was keeping her weary watch, a terrible choking sound met his ear.

"Mon Dieu!" he cried, springing to the child, taking it up, making a skilful incision in the throat, and sucking it with his own lips.

As he did so, his eyes fell on the large crucifix which hung on the wall of the ward, and in that instant it was permitted to Eustace Decourt, by his presence of mind and self-devotion, to snatch back from the very gates of the grave the life which was so precious to the boy's parents.

When shortly afterwards the more regular breathing was followed by quiet sleep, a small hand lay firmly clasped in the house physician's, and the angel of Death slowly spread his wings and departed.

The New Year was still in its infancy; its third sun indeed had only risen, when there were hushed voices and footsteps in one of the private rooms of that children's hospital, for Monsieur Decourt lay dying.

Attacked by diphtheria in its most severe form, which he had contracted by sucking the poisonous substance from little Henri's throat, and his frame being already weakened by anxiety and work, he had felt from the first that his recovery was doubtful.

The mighty Reaper, with scythe in hand, drew nearer and nearer; the sands in the hourglass of life were fast running out, when a messenger from the Tuileries demanded admittance, and was immediately brought into the dying man's presence.

"I am the bearer of the Legion of Honor; the account of your noble deed has reached their Majesties, and the Emperor sends you this, the highest distinction he can confer."

A light kindled in the eyes which were fast becoming dimmed, a momentary smile parted the parched lips. He feebly grasped the Legion of Honor, and pressed it to his breast; then slowly turning his head, looked steadfastly into the face of a woman whose cool hand lay upon his burning brow.

Another smile far brighter than the last, a few murmured words, of which only "Marie"——"years ago," were recognised by the watchers, a momentary struggle, and the young doctor passed away to the silent regions of the unknown land.

Decorated in the hour of death! Yes, and decorated beyond the grave, we can hardly doubt, with a far greater award of distinction than even the Legion of Honor.

There was a child's voice to welcome Gaspard Antin on his return home a few weeks later; and, as he grew in years, the little Henri was taught by both his parents to love and reverence, as a sacred household word, the name of Eustace Decourt.

Out West—A clergyman has been hinting to his congregation that they might, perhaps, be a little more original and industrious in their means of raising money. He told the people how the thing is done out West. There they have "crazy sociables," where the ladies come in the most fantastic costumes, and put the pickles in the sugar basin, and generally things are turned topsy-turvey. But the most amusing of the sociables, he continued, was one at which the ladies were put up to auction. The man who bid highest had the privilege of seeing the prettiest lady in the room home. The result was that if the lady had a sweetheart present he paid up his last dollar rather than let another see her home.

Her Gift.

BY T. L.

It was a week before the great day that brings rejoicing into the whole Christian world; and the brief gleam of sunshine that had lightened the forenoon was rapidly giving place to the veil of deep shadows which precedes the early evenings in December.

As the gathering twilight sent its message of rest to those whose work must be done by the light of the sun, an artist, who stood before an easel in a little cottage near Hampstead, laid down her brush and stamped her foot with ill-disguised impatience.

If the young lady had paused to consider for one moment, she would have remembered that no amount of stamping or exclamations of "Bother!" can alter the great laws which have ordained that twilight shall precede the darkness, and that darkness shall herald the night. The fair painter however was not disposed to listen to the dictates of reason, and carried her impatience so far as to rebel against Nature, for, taking her work to the window, and putting the curtains aside, she continued to "touch in" the foreground, utterly regardless of the cost to her eyes, and perhaps to the picture.

When however the light became quite too dim, and it was absolutely necessary to light the lamp, the tin box of colors was laid aside, and a little tray, on which tea-things were placed, was brought forward, and soon a copper kettle hissed merrily upon the hob.

Then Katie Graham seated herself in the one arm-chair, and, after pouring a little hot water into the teapot, began to make toast and to think.

And we will give shortly a resume of that industrious little woman's thoughts. Firstly, she said—

"I must give Frank a little present at Christmas. I cannot give him another of my pictures, the poor boy has so many, and he will believe that I am giving a present at no cost to myself. No, I will take it down to old Abraham, and buy something with the proceeds."

We can judge from this that "Frank" was somebody who had at least interested Katie, and had sufficiently interested her to be the fortunate recipient of a prospective gift.

These reflections pleased the young lady, for she poured herself out a cup of tea and ate the toast, despite the fact that in her abstraction she had allowed the fire to sadly burn it.

When she had done this she pulled aside the curtains and looked over the heath, covered now with its crisp mantle of white snow.

The lamps of Hendon shone out like stars dotted here and there on the landscape, the moon had risen, and the flood of yellow light fell upon the mist that was rising in the hollows and upon the myriads of crystals that the long reign of the Frost King sent up from the surface of the snow.

The foot-passengers walked in silence; there was scarce a sound save the muffled tramp from the hoofs of a passing horse.

The painter sighed, and, closing the shutters, drew her chair once again to the fireside.

Perhaps she was thinking of houses where many were preparing for joys of the coming week; perhaps of her own home, which had been so full of love and life in the days before her father had come to ruin, and her mother had died of a broken heart.

She was supporting herself now; true, it was but a bare subsistence that she earned by her brush and her pen, but in these days it is something to do that, and she was thankful for it.

It was a dreary life, alone in that cottage, with hardly a soul to talk to the whole day long; but then it was a life, and it is not every worker in this great City who can say that. She was on the point of getting a fit of the miserables, when a smart rap at the front door made her jump from her chair, hastily cover the oil painting up, put the kettle again on the fire, and arrange her hair just a little bit in the mirror over the chimney-piece.

The rap was followed by a heavy footstep upon the staircase; the door opened slowly, in answer to a "Come in," and discovered a figure wrapped in a fur-coat with a cape that left but a pair of twinkling blue eyes and a light moustache visible to the eye of a beholder.

"Frank," she said, "whatever brings you here? You know I did not expect you until Tuesday."

Frank replied by taking the questioner into his arms and giving her a hearty kiss.

Then, divesting himself of his frost-laden coat, he said—

"I have escaped the watchful eye, both of the governor and of the amiable old lady who would like to be a second mother to me. Kate, congratulate me. I'm going to be married!"

"Married? Oh, Frank!"

"At least I have been credited with the intention, and appearances are against me; you know Thackeray says that appearances are as condemning as guilt."

Katie only answered by raising her eyes in ill-disguised anxiety to her companion's face, who laughingly continued—

"You dear old girl! what a shame to tease you! I mean simply that my father has quite determined that I shall leave my liberty behind me with the old year, and take a wife with the new; so my very excellent friend, Mrs. Montagu, is bringing her three daughters on approbation to dinner to-night. She will have to take them all back, carriage paid, however, for I've come straight from the Club to see you."

Katie sighed again, and looked into the fire for a few moments; then she said—

"Frank, dear, our engagement has been a happy time—the happiest in my life; but, with your father's opposition, it will never be more than an engagement. Don't you think, for both our sakes, it would be wiser to brave the pain, and end it at once?"

Frank, thus addressed, drew his chair quite close to that of the speaker; and, putting his arm around her, placed the fair head near his own, and replied—

"My darling, we have often spoken together of the reasons that led us to hide our engagement for the present. That present shall now be the past, for I swear before the year is out to bring one woman to my father's table who shall be received and honored as my future wife."

It was the old vow, sworn "by all the gods" at the shrine of love, so easily framed when the heart is moved by eyes that tell an affection which shall last for life, so easily broken before the shrine of necessity and irate and relentless guardianship.

Who can condemn the dictates of truth that passion fashions into words—who can condemn the broken promises that have been shattered by the thousand-and-one unwritten laws that force us into a groove of unreality, that nip in the frost of sarcasm and contempt the budding bravery of the weakling's heart?

Frank returned to his home in Belgravia; with the morning sun Kate returned to her work. Ah, loving little heart! of all the hands that worked so well that Christmas-tide, none labored more truly than yours.

You needed sadly those few dollars, for your old stuff dress was in a bad way, and your winter cloak made you feel ashamed when you hurried down Piccadilly to sell your picture.

Besides, you charitable little woman, did you not give what was to provide you quite a little feast in the Christmas week, to that old scamp who told us a pitiful tale of starving children and widowed mother at your door the other day?

My dear Kate, you will never get on in this world, where everyone is for himself; and—well, we will not offend your delicate little ear by reminding you of the fate of the bindermost.

The picture was accepted—would be paid for by the end of the week.

That was annoying, but still it would leave one clear day on which to make the purchase.

Kate spent her afternoon in looking in all the gentlemen's shops in the Arcade and went home to dream of signet-rings, diamond pins, golden-headed sticks, and of other treasures which are popularly supposed to gladden the heart of man.

On the Friday she made her way down Piccadilly, and to the counting-house of her good friend, Mr. Abrahams. On the way she had quite decided that she would buy Frank a beautiful fleur-de-lys pin she had seen on Bond Street.

It would look superb in the white silk scarves he invariably wore, and was marked "Six dollars," whilst she expected seven at least for her picture.

She was asked to wait for some moments, and she spent the time looking about her for any trace of her own work. She could not see it; perhaps it had already found a home.

The manager interrupted her, and, with the utmost politeness, begged to say "that all the accounts were paid yesterday, and that the books would not again be opened until the following week."

Katie stood for a minute with all the pictures swimming before her eyes, a great lump rose in her throat, her voice failed her as she tried to say "Thank you," then she turned into the busy street, and in the hurrying crowd none stayed to remark that a girl of twenty passed by them, and that great tears would roll from her pretty blue eyes on the muff that she carried in her hand.

Men nodded a merry Christmas to fellow-men; beggars cried for charity; the shops were decked with every luxury that could adorn the person or houses; City clerks hurried by with baskets, suggesting turkeys and wine and sweets for the children; in every heart there was a corner for rejoicing in every home care was laid aside.

Oh, mighty season of gladness! where shall we find other creeds that can send as thou canst the word that bids charity and love abound, and find that word re-echoed in town and city, by rich and poor, in palace or cottage, from one end of this great world unto the other?

Had the message come to all, this Christmas of which we write?

Was there not one creature who said, "What have I to be glad about? What has the good season brought to me?"

We have only to look for our answer in the artist's cottage at Hampstead, where, kneeling by the small fire, a woman, with her face buried in her hands, no longer restrained the tears of a bitter disappointment.

* * * * * *

At No. 91, Chelsea Embankment, a cab drove up on Christmas Eve, and an old gentleman paid the driver something extra because of the season.

Then a butler of pompous mein descended the steps of the house, as if alarmed at his own condescension, and consented to relieve the master of a small oil-painting he was lifting out of the cab.

Sir James Hellison was, and had been from his earliest years, a great patron of art.

Caring nothing for names, he had searched the hidden villages of Italy, the quaint old Flemish towns, the bye-streets of the Metropolis, where Jew dealers lived on the brains of unknown and unrecognized workers in the world's school of art.

A beautiful collection was the result of his labors, persevered with to such an extent that his friends said he lived but for his pictures and his son Frank.

And perhaps he did.

An honest, God-fearing man, who looked the whole world in the face and was not ashamed, he had brought the boy up in a way that made his female relatives lift their hands in horror and his male acquaintances call him "an old brick."

On this Christmas Eve he had gone abroad to buy "Frank" a few presents, and a small, but exquisitely finished sketch had caught his eye when in Piccadilly. He purchased it, with many other articles, saying, "The boy and myself have had a tiff. We must make it up. He shan't marry the woman if he doesn't want to."

So he returned home, where his two elder sisters were superintending the Christmas festivities and impressing upon their brother the speedy necessity of marrying his self-willed son to the wealthy, the accomplished, the retiring Miss Montagu.

Sir James for a moment was disposed to listen to them, then he consulted Frank upon the subject, made a petty domestic war for the Christmas week, and finally, like a wise general, had drawn off his forces and owned his defeat.

Frank, in the meanwhile, had resolved twenty times each day to raise his courage and to break his secret.

Excellent resolves they were—as strong as the vase that stands upon the pedestal, and as frail when exposed to the trial of the least blow given in reality.

His resolutions remained as they were framed in his mind, before the sarcasm of his aunts and the kindness of his father. Before dinner that evening Sir James took him aside into his own study, and said—

"Frank, my boy, we have had a few differences lately. They are ended—here's my hand on it. Heaven bless you!"

A presentation of the gifts followed. They were valuable, and bore witness to the generosity of the donor.

The recipient expressed his gratitude in few words, until he came to the picture. Before that he turned now red, now white, and for the life of him could not say a word.

Sir James saw his confusion, and, walking over to his side, asked—

"Frank, you do not seem like the sketch?"

"Father, the sketch is the most beautiful thing we have in the house. Give me one more present, and I will thank you for my lifetime."

"And that is?"

"The painter!"

Sir James looked at him for a moment, then, with a hearty peal of laughter, a cordial shake of the hand, and a slap on the shoulder, he said—

"Frank, she's yours as far as I can give her. Now, you dog, come and tell me all about it."

The tale was soon told. Within the hour father and son were inside their single brougham and upon the highroad to Hampstead.

* * * * * *

"Clear away the supper! And it's not a blessed bit you've 'ad to eat since breakfast, and Christmas time and all. Now, there's a drop of soup as I've got down stairs, as I says to Mr. Harris, says I——"

"My dear Mrs. Harris, you're very kind, but I really could not eat anything. I'm not very well to-night, and I think I'll go to bed."

The old woman muttered, "Well, I never! And Christ-time too!" Then she went downstairs to have a glass of egg-sherry with the respected Mr. Harris, who had been keeping Christmas to such an extent already that he walked with "measured step and slow."

Katie prepared to go to bed. She had already her hand upon the lamp to turn out, when the sound of carriage wheels upon the snow made her pause.

The carriage was stopping, had stopped, and before the door.

Three knocks—impressive footman's knocks—visitors. A heavy tramp upon the stairway, a knock at her own door, and in a moment she feels two strong arms around her, and warm kisses upon her face.

Sir James then takes both her hands in his, and looks at those pretty eyes until they are cast down before his gaze.

"My dear," he says, "and you really painted the sketch of the fisherwoman I purchased at Abraham's this morning?"

"You bought it?"

"Yes, and I consider it the best thing I have seen for a twelvemonth. Frank, your wife will make a name, and that soon. I congratulate you in giving me such a daughter-in-law."

* * * * * *

That night Katie was taken to Belgravia. There in her happiness she told Frank the disappointment over which she had shed so many tears.

"But, darling," he said, "you must never regret that you painted that picture, for by it the happiness of my whole future life was secured."

And that was her Christmas gift.

It seems that nature, which has so wisely disposed our bodily organs with a view to our happiness, has also bestowed on us pride, to spare us the pain of being aware of our imperfections.

Rejected.

BY H. W. L.

"MY dear Estcote, I have to ride over to Burleton Place this morning. Will you accompany me? Do?"

"Certainly, Sir Martin, with pleasure," replied Charlie Estcote, though mentally he pulled a long face as he glanced at a pretty girl, his host's daughter, seated behind the urn, dispensing the matutinal tea, "if you will not ask me to go in."

"No," laughed Sir Martin Lyndal, "I'll not ask you in, since you have such an aversion to the Miss Burletons."

"Well, a man's never safe with them. If it were possible they would carry him off, put up the banns, and marry him before he could say Jack Robinson."

"What, all marry him?" smiled Rose Lyndal, Sir Martin's only child and heiress.

"Well no, I suppose not that: but——"

"But Estcote is in mortal dread of them," laughed the Baronet, rising, "so, my dear boy, you can ride on while I call. I shall start about eleven," he added, as, collecting his letters, he left the room.

Sir Martin Lyndal was the owner of a pretty little estate, and one of the most charming daughters in all Goldenmeads. At the present moment he had one guest, the orphan son of an old friend, Charlie Estcote, who drew a good income from the bank in which his father had invested his large capital, having once, before retiring, been a partner.

As Rose quitted her seat on Sir Martin's departure, Charles Estcote said, earnestly:

"Why do you not ride with us, Miss Lyndal? It is such a fine morning."

"Why? Because papa was not gallant enough to ask me," she laughed.

"Perhaps he did not think it necessary," replied Estcote, following her to the window. "If you would go, you will please us both."

"Do you really mean that?" she remarked, with a coquettish glance. "Or are you a flatterer?"

"To flatter in this case would be impossible," replied Estcote, his eyes full of earnest love. "When one looks upon truth, one must speak it. Do go for my sake, or I shall die of ennui of my own society while waiting for Sir Martin."

"Well, I am not in the humor for a canter this morning," answered Rose, "and as I must have a cavalier, I'll accept two. So, Mr. Estcote, kindly order Fly to be saddled and brought round with papa's horse and yours, while I gather my flowers. Ah! there is one of the gardeners. I'll overtake him."

Estcote, with a word of thanks for her consent, and having lifted her hand to his lips, hurried away to the stables, while Rose crossed the lawn.

"I feel the turning point in my life has come," he reflected, "the moment which is to make or mar me. I'll ask her, while waiting for Sir Martin, if she will be my wife. If she refuses, then—am I as a ruined gamester, my future deprived of all hope. But"—and his dark, handsome face brightened—"she will not refuse. I'm certain she loves me."

Could he have looked into Rose's little beating heart as she hurried away into the shrubbery, purposely missing the gardener he would have been very sure of it. Her eyes danced with happiness.

"He loves me," she thought. "But that I knew a week. His eyes, his tone have declared that from the first. But I feel today will end all doubt; and to-morrow—to-morrow—I shall be his engaged wife!"

With a thrill of rapture she paused, pressing her hands to her throbbing cheeks. Then she removed them, hearing voices. There were persons at the other side of a huge group of evergreens. She recognized one as Gresham Randolph, a friend of Estcote's who lived in the neighborhood.

"So you've come from London to see Estcote?" she heard him say.

"Yes, there's no getting a sight of him now in town," answered a strange voice. "You know he's gone in for the Heiress."

Rose started, then colored indignantly.

"Of course. And what is more, my boy, he'll win. The game's up; and Charlie knows it too. Why, he offered to bet me fifty to one upon his chance."

It so drew her breath quickly. A pain shot through her heart.

"It'll be a heavy pull for him if he's made a mistake," remarked the other.

"He can stand it. He's got money."

"That's according to how a fellow lives. No chap cares to lose a pot of tin, if he's able to gain it."

"And he will gain it with the Heiress," was the response. "Why, from her first appearance, he laid bets heavily at the club that he would win."

The speakers had been moving round the clump of evergreens. Soon they were out of hearing. Rose leaned, sick and dizzy against a tree.

And this was the man she loved so—so dearly! who had seemed so honorable, so fondly loving! After all, it was of her he'd an interest to alone thought, those glances had been but acting!

"No, no. It can't be possible!" cried Rose. "He does love me. Love me?" now with indignation and scorn. "What is that man's love worth who can lay bets in a public club upon his power of winning its object? As if he had but to hold up his finger for her to come. But he is mistaken; and," she laughed bitterly, "he will lose his bets—also the pot of tin."

Rose's first thought was to change her mind about the riding. But she had been wrought into a state of indignant rebellion. She wanted Estcote to propose; she wanted by her manner to let him believe he never had had a chance of success.

So she dressed, and with the red rose nestling at her throat, and the bright flush on her cheeks, looked more than usually charming.

At least Charles thought so, and his pulse went several degrees faster when he reflected that he soon should call her his.

But he was mistaken.

When Sir Martin had ridden off alone to Burleton Place, after awhile, as they proceeded at a slow pace down a sunny lane, he avowed his passion, earnestly fervently, with so well acted a sincerity that Rose had found it difficult not to believe him, and to maintain her resolve. Ah! how dearly she loved him.

But she recalled the conversation she had overheard. The bets that had been made by him who now was addressing her with such seeming truth, and she refused the "honor" he would do her.

She spoke very quietly but very firmly. She was sorry if he had fancied her manner had ever encouraged him to address her as he had, but she had been guiltless of intent. He had been mistaken.

Charlie Estcote sat his horse, white to the lips, a startled expression of intense pain in his handsome eyes. He could not believe his ears. She had encouraged him, only as a gentleman he could not tell her so. He could not say that she, who to him had appeared so innocent, straightforward, and true, was a cruel heartless flirt after all.

"Is this your final answer, Miss Lyndal?" he asked, huskily.

"It is, Mr. Estcote," she replied, looking straight between her horse's ears. "I know it is a lady's privilege to change her mind, but I am not likely to change mine."

"May I ask"—puzzled by her manner, so different from what he had expected, so unlike herself—"if you have any reason?"

"Is that a necessary question?" and looking at him, she raised her delicate brows slightly. "I feel that we should not suit each other, that our marriage would not be a happy one. Ah!"—with what intense relief she spoke it!—"here comes papa."

Rose talked as usual during the ride home; but on reaching her room she flung herself into a chair, and wept as she had rarely wept before.

"To think how I loved him!" she sobbed. "How I would have died for him. Now to learn he is unworthy any woman's love! It is too—too cruel!"

She managed to recover herself sufficiently to descend for luncheon, and found Sir Martin alone, in a state of perfect bewilderment.

"Pet!" he exclaimed, on her entrance, "what has happened? What is it all about? Estcote is off, and leaves the explanation to you. Can you explain?"

He tossed a letter across the table, and she read as follows:

"Dear Sir Martin: A thousand thanks for your many acts of kindness to me; pray yet further add to them by excusing my abrupt departure, without leave-taking. Miss Lyndal will explain. At present I am too miserable to be quite aware whether I am in my senses or out of them.

Yours sincerely"

"CHARLES ESTCOTE."

"Yes, papa, I can explain," said Rose, with a quivering lip. "Mr. Estcote proposed this morning, and I refused him."

"Refused him, pet!" Tout! Why, I had set my heart on this union. I could have declared you loved him; and, by Jove! Estcote thought so too. I'm certain of it."

"Oh, yes, papa, *speculated* upon it," she remarked, with an malignant heightening of color.

"What do you mean, pet?"

"That we have both been grossly deceived in him. That—that my heart is breaking, but I'll never marry Charles Estcote."

Weeping, she threw herself in her father's arms, and told him all.

"The young scoundrel!" ejaculated Sir Martin wrathfully. "And he is my dear old friend's son."

"Papa, say no more. He is gone, and it is over," said Rose. "He is best forgotten."

But it was not so easy to forget. His remembrance haunted her. Eagerly in secret, but with outward indifference, she listened to any news of him, or even when possible, sought for it.

She loved him still; she could not help that. But marry him—no, never!

Days grew into weeks; and, after all, it was very small intelligence she got of Charles Estcote. She had grown paler; her spirits had gone; she was vexed it should be so, but she could not prevent it. Sir Martin suggested going abroad for a change. She accepted the proposal gladly, yet kept putting off the going. One night, however, vexed at her own weakness, she said:

"Papa dear, if you don't mind, let us start for Paris next week."

"Certainly, my love."

But the following morning there was news—terrible news of Estcote.

The bank of such old renown and stability had stopped payment. New partners had been taken in—partners of speculative proclivities, and the result had been smash—failure.

"Papa, what does this mean to Mr Estcote?" asked Rose.

"Absolute ruin, and he deserves it!"

"No, no, not that. Papa, you must go to him—help him."

"Pet, perhaps he will write. We'll wait a day."

Rose consented, but in Estcote's ruin she had forgotten all anger. She was miserable for him.

"If he had my money he would not be poor," she reflected. "Well, I will prove my love. He shall again be rich, for I will marry him. We will wait to-day, but to-morrow we will go to town and see him."

That afternoon was Rose's "at home," and she had to receive. Fortunately, owing to a thunder-storm, but one guest, a gentleman, appeared. Naturally, the great failure was spoken of—as England was speaking of it.

"You have heard of course, Miss Lyndal?" said the guest, Major Speldyke. "A bad thing for Estcote—yes, very. True it is that troubles never come alone. He had another crusher yesterday."

"Another? What was that, Major Speldyke?" Asked Rose, breathlessly.

"The horse he had backed very heavily—foolishly—against all the field—only came in a bad second."

"And what does that mean, Major?"

"Why, that he has incurred debts of honor that he can't possibly pay, my dear Miss Lyndal, and that's a very nasty thing indeed for an honorable man. Nothing could be worse."

A cold chill crept over Rose; she sat like a statue at her tea-table, her hands rigidly locked together.

"When a man can't meet debts of honor, Major—excuse my ignorance—what does he do?"

"A man, my dear Miss Lyndal, generally bolts, and enjoys himself abroad for the rest of his natural life; a gentleman, when he cannot give money—takes his life."

"Ah!" with a cry: "and Mr. Estcote is a gentleman?"

"Certainly: poor fellow; no one more honorable," replied the Major, putting down his cup. "He was—or is—a great friend of yours. I see you are moved. Permit me to retire."

"Thank you; thank you much."

When alone, Rose wept as if her heart would break.

Then starting up, however, she sought Sir Martin.

"Papa," she cried, "we must not wait until to-morrow. We must go to Mr. Estcote at once."

And she poured into his ear what she heard.

To her Sir Martin pooh-poohed the idea; but, secretly alarmed for his old friend's son, was as eager to reach town as Rose herself.

On reaching Charing Cross, they drove at once to Charles Estcote's chambers. He was not at home; but, being expected every moment, they said they would wait. It was a handsome suite, with a dining-room and small drawing-room adjoining.

"Papa," said Rose, "may I see Mr. Estcote first alone?"

"Certainly. It's best. You will manage it better than I, pet."

So Sir Martin went into the inner room, and Rose waited. Not for long. Soon the door opened, and Charlie entered. Oh! how changed! how worn!

"Rose—Miss Lyndal!" he cried in amazement.

"Yes," and she advanced with extended hands. "Charlie, we know all—your ruin has taught me something. You know it is a woman's privilege to change her mind—mine has changed!"

"Rose, my darling, can it be?" and he fondly clasped her in his arms; but in a moment he released her. "No," he went on, "I am mad. This, Rose, is pity, not love. I cannot accept the sacrifice. You did not love me when you refused me!"

"I loved you with all my heart!" she answered.

"Then why refuse me?"

"I will tell you when—when we are married—if you will marry me."

Blushing, she turned partly from him, looking down; as she did so her eyes rested on an open letter lying on the table, and she read the words:

"Dear Estcote: 'So the Heiress has only come in a second. Haven't you lost a pot of tin?'"

Seizing it, she held it out towards him.

"Who wrote this?" she asked.

"John Serle," he answered, in surprise; "he who came to the Lawns to see me the day I left."

"And who is the Heiress?"

"The horse I so foolishly backed, being so sure to win. Why, I laid fifty to one, but what interest has this——"

He could say no more—Rose had thrown herself in his arms.

"Oh, Charlie!" she exclaimed, half crying, half laughing, "the secret is out. It's all been a mistake. I heard those two men talking about the Heiress—the horse—and—and I thought they meant me, and—and that you had been betting on your success."

What could he answer? what did he? Whatever it was, Rose was content.

But Charles Estcote settled his debts with his own money, for the bank paid fifteen shilling on the pound; while the Heiress, the following year, won the Derby.

CURIOUS ENGLISH.—In the Palais Royal in Paris, a sign reads "Macaroni not baked sooner ready," and in the Rue St. Honore another one reads "Hear to eat off here in English fashion." At the Montesquieu Bath we are informed that "As for the brothes, liquid or any breakfast, and, in one word, all other things relatives to the service of the bathes, the Persons will be so good as to direct themselves to the servant bathers who will satisfy them with the greatest attention. The public is invited not to search to displace the suckets and swan necks in order to forbear the accidents which may result of is, in not calling the servant bathers to his aid. The servant bathers, in consequence of having no wages, desire the bathers do not forget them."

FORTUNE does not change men; it unmasks them.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

London papers relate the story of a Welsh preacher who started on the cars to fulfill an engagement. When the conductor came for his ticket he had forgotten to bring it, and also had forgotten his money. What was worse he had forgotten where he was going. It was found impossible to suggest to him any station that seemed to be the right one, and he had to telegraph home to have his friends look into his diary and send him word where he was going. Word came and he was started on all right again.

It is estimated that there are now in Europe, Asia, the United States and Canada about 50 institutions for the education for feeble-minded children, these all originated, says a Western writer, in the effort of Edwin Seguin, a French physician, who, exactly 50 years ago, gave up a brilliant career and devoted himself to the cure and restoration of these unfortunates. He discovered and taught that idiocy is not the result of the deficiency of the brain, nor of malformation, but is the result of an arrested developement, occuring at any stage, before, at, or after birth. In his own school he succeeded in counteracting this arrest of developement and in restoring to society about 75 per cent. of his pupils.

A Glade river, W. Va., special says: About four miles from this hamlet on Glade Mountain resides a family of coincidences. The father and mother were married on the 14th of October; they have had nine children, all of whom were born on the 14th of October; five of the children are dead, and all five of them ceased to breathe on the 14th day of October. The name of the head of the family is Joshua Franklin. He says he was a Confederate soldier, that he was captured twice by the Yankees, that he lost two brothers in the war, and that all four of the mishaps or misfortunes of war occurred on the memorable 14th of October. In the neighborhood the Franklin family is regarded with superstition, and not a human being can be prevailed upon to go in the house or stay on the premises on the 14th of October.

A New York jeweller who has been suffering at the hands of thieves, writes, "I identified the goods without any trouble, but the courts held that unless the thieves were arrested and convicted, I could not recover my property without paying for it. It is needless to say that the thieves made good their escape, and that my goods are out of my reach. In view of this injustice, under which no doubt hundreds of other jewellers, as well as myself, have suffered I would suggest that steps be taken to have the Legislature enact a law requiring pawnbrokers to insist upon the proper identification of persons wishing to pledge watches, diamonds, jewelry or any other valuable goods. It would not be an insult to any honest person to ask him to produce some one to vouch for him in a pawnshop, any more than it is in any national bank in the United States, where the paying teller requires the person presenting the check to be identified before he will pay the money."

The Spanish are, undoubtedly, rather a bloodthirsty people. Their bull fights are bad enough, in all conscience, but I have come across an even worse example of their ferocious character. The other day at Gergal, in the province of Huelva, two young men were engaged to two sisters who quarrelled over some trifling matter, and agreed to settle their dispute by a duel in which both should be wounded and at least one killed. The barbarous conditions were that the right foot of one should be bound to the left foot of the other, and then, that each armed with a dagger, they should stab one another in turn until one should die. These terrible arrangements were literally carried out in the presence of seconds, who calmly watched the affair with cigarettes in their mouths. Each combatant received seven wounds. One of them expired while still tied to his enemy, and the other was only unloosed in time to die. We do not believe that four men in any other civilized country would have been parties to such a cold-blooded atrocity.

From time to time when medical knowledge was first embodied in rules of practice, and probably from a much earlier period, music held a recognised place in the treatment of disease. In no class of disease, however, are we likely to derive so much benefit from the use of so pleasant a remedy as in those affecting the mind itself. In melancholia and allied states of depression its value is generally admitted even in our own day. Ancient practitioners were also cognizant of its usefulness in this respect. We must all have felt how suitable is its infinite variety and facility of expression to the changing moods of the sane, and it is therefore the less difficult to understand how straying minds are pleased and settled by its charm. Certain it is that its beneficial effect is in this case considerable, and our readers, though possibly unable to acquire a knowledge of the art, should at least possess, and if needful, assert in practice a sense of its therapeutic value.

I will have a care of being a slave to myself, for it is a perpetual, a shameful, and the heaviest of all servitudes, and this may be done by moderate desires.

Our Young Folks.

MR. PEPPER'S BOYS.

BY PIPKIN.

TOMMY BOUNCE was a terrible boy; it was he who got up the bar-out. Little Willie Smith said afterwards that the big dog Ponto was to blame for it all; but that was not fair.

Ponto was the school-dog, and he was going to the show.

For weeks past we had greased our clothes by putting away scraps of dinner in our pockets; and we had made secret raids into the yard where Ponto's kennel was, and tried to keep him from making a noise when he saw us, and fed him with those scraps; we had an idea that if he was fat he would win the prize.

On Monday the show was to open at the park, and as it was our half term holiday we all hoped to go and see Ponto in his place.

On Saturday some fellow's ball smashed the study window, and hit Mr. Pepper himself. Just then the bell rang; and what do you think Mr. Pepper said?

He scolded us all for sending our ball towards the windows, and ended by saying, "For reasons of my own, Monday will not be a holiday."

We all shrieked—

"Were we not to go to see Ponto on Monday?"

"Silence! No!" said Mr. Pepper.

It was then that Tommy Bounce got up the bar-out, and made all the boys of the upper division join him.

If the master would not let us out for a holiday we would not let him into the schoolroom.

The best runner—his name was Dick Dandy—was sent over the playground wall to lay out our pocket money. Every boy had written what he wanted on a piece of paper and rolled his money into it.

Dick came back over the wall, at a great risk, with a large parcel, which was taken upstairs and hidden under Tommy Bounce's bed.

Next Tommy tore a leaf out of his copy-book (he had already torn out so many that the book consisted of two leaves and two covers); on this leaf he wrote in large round-hand.

Mr. Pepper's was a Preparatory School, and we were all in large roundhand, and the upper division were not very high up or big either.

Well, he wrote out a promise that we would not "funk," as he called it, but we would go through with the bar-out.

We all signed it with our blood, by sticking our thumb with a gold scarf-pin that Dick Dandy kept in his desk.

The pin and the paper was passed round at evening study-time. Little Willie Smith screamed out loud; Mr. Hookem wanted to know what was the matter with the boy, and it was all near being found out.

Willie was the youngest in our schoolroom, and we said he was a baby to scream out. But he said he would not have screeched, only he had no idea that Tommy was going to stick anything in his thumb.

On Sunday Tommy Bounce opened the parcel, and found that nearly all the boys had sent for the same thing.

The result was twelve pots of jam, a mutton pie, and two strawberry tees; and the strawberry tees were gone into the mutton pie.

"The provisions are not as good as I could have wished," he said, making his report like a general. "We must attack the pantry the first thing in the morning."

Twelve boys were in the secret, and at least six of them could not sleep that night. All were up and dressed before the bell rang to call us.

Softly we crept down the stairs, carrying a bed-room jug of water to drink, and trying to pretend that we were not afraid.

Through the schoolroom window we saw Roberts driving away in the cart, with Ponto looking over the back of it and barking proudly.

They were off to the show. We cheered for Ponto, forgetting how early it was in the morning.

From that moment everybody knew that we were carrying out some mischief: and when Tommy and another boy went to the pantry they were pursued by the cook, and though they seized five loaves of bread, they had to drop them in a scramble along the passage, and they came back with only one loaf.

Tommy then locked the door and ordered us to pile desks against it, to prevent it from being opened even if another key was found.

There were shutters to the bay window that could be closed and barred at the moment of attack; but for the present we left the window open to the sunny garden, and spies were sent out, who reported that the others were at breakfast in the dining room, and that Mr. Pepper's ham and eggs could be distinctly smelt on the balmy morning air.

Why, they had actually gone to breakfast without taking any notice of us!

"After breakfast," said Tommy, cutting up our loaf with his pocket-knife, "there will be a terrible siege. But Mr. Pepper will have to give us the holiday and a free pardon before we let him in."

Just as he spoke, Mr. Pepper coughed in the hall, and the knob of the door rattled. We kept as still as mice; two or three who were talking stood on one leg. Some turned white.

Little Willie Smith put his knuckles in his eyes, and began to cry to get out. Then the silence was over. Tom Bounce stuffed the duster of the blackboard into his mouth, and told him he was a traitor who had broken the pledge he had signed in the blood of his heart. Poor Willie was trying to speak, so Dick rescued him, and he only wanted to say, in a piping voice—

"It wasn't my heart; it was my thumb!"

We were beginning to laugh when Tommy cried out—

"Oh! oh!—look!"

And there was the head of Mr. Hookem rising up outside the window.

Tom rushed and closed the shutters, shouting, "Excuse me, sir, there's no admittance."

We listened in the dark, and heard him say outside, with a laugh—

"Thought that I was coming in the window."

From this we judged that he only [illegible] to look in, and that the grand attack would still be made upon the door.

When his step had gone away on the gravel we let in a little light, and finished our loaf. There was nothing to drink out of but the bedroom jug: it passed round the room, each boy holding it in turn while the next drank. The worst of it was, that the fellow who held it always tilted it up too fast, and the water went splash over our chins and our waistcoats.

We heard the school-bells ring again and again. We heard the shouts of play-time at the back; and still there had been no attack upon the door. Then the dinner-bell rang, and we became aware of a smell of roast meat, and a noise of footsteps, voices, and laughter crossing the hall.

This was very trying.

We were twelve healthy hungry boys, and there was nothing for us but a broken mutton pie with gravy like wax, and with two strawberry tees sp lt into it.

"Oh! do let me go out to my dinner. I know there are roast potatoes," Willie Smith begged.

We all began to laugh, and someone among us said—

"Turn him out; it will be one less for the pie."

So Tom Bounce opened the window, and lowered him out by the collar of the jacket, saying—

"Traitor, begone!"

The traitor ran away, like a cat out of a bag; but when we thought he had gone in by the glass door from the playground, all at once there was a tap at the glass, and he was waiting on the window-sill, for the world like the cat come back again.

Poor little Willie Smith had never thought what Mr. Pepper would say to him, until he was at the dining-room door; there he thought of it, and ran back in fright.

"And do you know," he said, "they are all eating their dinner, just as if we were not having a bar-out."

Tommy said we were heroes, and we should have hot meat too. He sent two boys out to the wood-yard: Roberts the man-servant nearly caught them, but they scrambled in the window with loads of wood.

We found matches and made a fire, drew drew the benches around it, closed the shutters, and fried the pie in slices on slates.

As last as the slates split and shot, the slices were put on others. At last each hungry boy had a few bites. It tasted of slate-pencil, strawberries, mutton, sugar and salt—all in one.

It was a long, long hungry day. We talked of Ponto, and even that subject did not cheer us. We talked of Mr. Pepper in hushed voices, and quaked. Still the seige had not begun; no one tried to force open the door.

Our fire died out, evening came—and no supper; darkness fell—and no lamps; bed-time—no bed. It was the longest day we ever knew. The hardest day of tasks could not have been so weary and hard to bear as this.

What was to become of us?

Our bar-out had failed because we had been left by the master to ourselves to get tired. We could not stay there all night, nor could we creep off to bed with the prospect of waking up to-morrow to be thrashed.

So the barriers were taken down, the door unlocked, and, with our shoes in our hands, we stole quietly upstairs, because we wanted to give ourselves up to Mr. Pepper, and to no one else: and with fear and trembling we knocked at his study-door.

He came and opened it. We gasped out all together—

"If you please, sir, we are sorry."

His moustache twitched, and he gave a sort of cough.

It could not be possible that he was inclined to laugh, could it? Yet we must have looked funny, all in a crowd, with our shoes in our hands, come to surrender because nobody had taken any notice of us.

"Ah, I thought you would find out your mistake soon enough," Mr. Pepper said. "Now you don't deserve to be kindly treated; but, as the others have gone to bed, you may go down and ask the housekeeper for some supper; and in the morning I'll come into your schoolroom at nine o'clock and speak to you."

We thanked him fervently. Willie Smith got excited, and began saying—

"O! you're a——" and we knew it was —"Oh! you're a brick, sir," and he stopped suddenly and looked as blank as a wall, as if he had overstepped his mouth; so Tommy Bounce must have pinched him.

Even after supper it was not easy to sleep that night, for we were all excitement discussing our probable fate and what was to become of us in the morning.

At nine o'clock the next day Mr. Pepper came into our schoolroom, and found on his desk a letter written in a great hurry by Tommy—on the last remaining leaf of his copy-book—and signed by us all—

"Dear sir we wish to say how sorry we are for yesterday it was very unhappy and on account of the dog the mutton pie was warmed on the slates for breaking which we are very sorry having strawberry tees inside and being had cold so we hope you will forgive us and never do such a thing again."

Then followed all our names. When Mr. Pepper read this production—which had only one stop in it—his moustache twitched again and he coughed.

He was not so angry as we expected. He said we would begin lessons at once, and Mr. Hookem would teach us to-day, as he himself was going out with the other boys, to spend a whole day's holiday.

We looked at each other. Were the other boys going out?

"This is the half-term holiday," he said. "But of course you can't have it to-day, as you took it yesterday."

Oh, how disappointed we felt! Why, he had not taken away our holiday because the ball broke the window; he had only put it off from Monday to Tuesday for some reason of his own; and when we saw all the other boys going out with him gaily in the afternoon we learned the reason.

They were off to the dog show, while we were doing our sums wearily on nasty scraps of broken slates. This, then, was the reason why our holiday was put off—Mr. Pepper wished his boys to enjoy the show better by being present on the day when the prizes were given. We saw Ponto in the evening, and he had got a prize.

Willie Smith blamed the poor dog for all our troubles; but that was not fair of him, for the bar-out was entirely our own fault.

A CAMEL RIDE.

BY MRS. D. K.

"DO wake up, Mabel! See what Ramahena has just brought us! Listen now: 'A Camel and kagawas for Miss Hilda and Miss Mabie Houghton, from Major Stanhope.'"

"How delightful having a camel of our own!" cried Mabel, jumping out of bed. "I do hope papa won't say that it will be a little troublesome to take about with us. What sort of a beast is a kagawas?"

"You are silly, Mabel," laughed Hilda. "Do you think we could travel about India in a train with a camel running after us? And a kagawas isn't an animal at all, it's a cameldriver! Don't you remember Major Stanhope saying last night, when papa was talking of how he should take us with him into the Bolan Pass, that he would let us have one of his transport camels, and that he would have a paunier put on it, and send it round this morning, and we could ride round the garden on it."

Hilda and Mabel had lately lost their mother, and as, for the present, they had no near relation who could give them a home, they had come out to India with their father, an officer, whose regiment was just now quartered at Sibi, on the border of Afghanistan.

"Let's be quick; our dressing-gowns, sunhats, and slippers will be quite enough to put on for riding round the garden," said Hilda.

"You do look a guy, Mabel, with your dirty face, and rough hair streaming all down your back, and that enormous mushroom like hat!"

"Not a bit worse than you," retorted Mabel; "one of your toes is peeping out of your slipper."

They found the camel waiting at the door with the white-robed, white turbaned kagawas, at whose command the great beast went down upon its knees, while the children got on to the paunier seats on either side of its hump.

Mabel and Hilda half shrieked and half laughed when the camel, with very jerky movements, rose from the ground, and they had to hold on tight, or they would have been jerked off altogether.

The children had never ridden on a camel before, and it seemed very queer to them to be so high up in the air, and to be swayed to and fro, for a camel, unlike any other animal, moves both fore and hind leg of one side together.

They were in fact so taken up with exclaiming at the novelty of their situation that they did not notice that they had left the garden far behind them, and were on the main road.

"Wherever are we!" they both cried, suddenly looking around.

"Do tell the kagawas to go back, Hilda, do; just fancy if were to meet some of the officers, dressed as we are!"

But as neither of the children could speak a word of Hindostani, and as the kagawas could speak nothing else, it was in vain they shouted to him, for he did not even turn his head, probably thinking that they were talking to one another.

To the children's horror, they found they were being led slowly but steadily straight towards the officers cantonment.

"Whatever shall we do?" cried Hilda. "And what will papa say if he meets us?"

"Oh, I do hope Captain Hamilton won't meet us for he'll just tease our lives out."

"I see lots of officers going out for their morning ride, and we are going right in amongst them!"

"Dear me! my slipper's fallen off," cried Hilda; and the one with the hole in it too! I can't pull my dressing gown quite over my bare foot! Isn't it dreadful?"

"What wicked fairy has been making you ride about all night on camel back, instead of letting you sleep quietly in your bed?" asked Colonel Johnston, smiling as he looked at the two queer little figures.

"Why this horrid old black kagawas fairy. Please do tell him to take us home. We only meant to ride around the garden and he has actually brought us here."

The kagawas obeyed the colonel's orders, but as the camel jogged along at the rate of two miles and a half an hour, officer after officer passed them on horseback, many joking, and all laughing at them.

"Here comes that dreadful Captain Hamilton!" shrieked Hilda: "and I do believe he has my old slipper on the point of his sword!"

"I'll keep this elegant little shoe, Miss Cinderella," said the captain, riding up to them, and he rode by the children's side, teasing them all the way home. And his last words were—

"Now mind, when your are riding through the Bolan Pass to-morrow with your father, take care to avoid using the word 'b-l-t-a,'" for if the camel hears it he will lie down that instant, and roll over with you in the sand, and if you are crossing the river you will get a good ducking. 'B-l-t-e' is the Hindostani for 'lie down.'

The children were delighted to get home at last, and after they had bathed, dressed, and breakfasted they forgot their vexation, and themselves laughed heartily at the whole affair.

THE KAFIR WOMAN.—The following is an account of the custom of courtship among the remote tribes of Kafiristan, in India:

A Kafir, having fixed his affections upon some female, acquaints his parents with his intentions. They apply to the parents of the girl, and if the latter do not consent to the union, a fight is inevitable.

If the parties agree, the next proceeding is to appoint two expert female negotiators, who, by stratagems, gain access to the house with the object of broaching the subject to the young lady.

The lady ambassadors carefully avoid any sudden or abrupt mention of the awful subject of their mission, but lurch out in praise of the gentleman who seeks her hand.

They speak of his possessions, his courage, and other accomplishments. The girl, pretending to be affronted even at these remote hints, grows refractory and runs away, tearing the ringlets of her hair as she retires; while the female ambassadors, having got the consent of the parents, drag her from her concealment and carry her by force to the house of her destined husband, and there leave her, where she is compelled to remain for days silent and dejected, refusing food, till at last, if kind words do not prevail, she is made to submit by blows to the union.

The Kafir who has the reputation of having committed a number of murders of Mahommedans enjoys exceptional privileges; he is respected by all in the neighborhood, and experiences little or no difficulty in procuring a wife for himself.

The Kafir woman is doomed to a life of toil and drudgery, and the husband has the option of discarding her at any moment he feels so disposed.

CARRIER PIGEONS.—The telegraph has no mean rival in carrier pigeons which are being trained more and more every year to carry messages between given points. Five pigeon lofts have been established in prominent places in and around New York City, and communication is carried on regularly between offices in town and country homes and factories.

Recent experiments show that a bird may be so trained as to take its food at one station and water at another, thus flying regularly between the two places. Homing pigeons did most remarkable service during the Franco-Prussian War.

The French soldiers shut up in Paris during the seige, sent out of the city by means of balloon, over three hundred pigeons, of these fifty-seven returned with official dispatches and private messages.

The science of photography was made to help in the most ingenious fashion. Ordinary print, covering a space ten feet square, was photographed so as to occupy space on a delicate collodion film about the size of a postage stamp.

These films were tied to the feathers of the birds, and carried back to the lofts in Paris. By the aid of magic lantern the were easily deciphered.

SELF-TAUGHT.—Many men are said to be self taught. No man was ever taught in any other way.

Do you suppose a man is a bucket, to be hung on the well of knowledge, and pumped full?

Man is a creature that learns by the exertion of his own faculties. There are aids to learning of various kinds, but no matter how many of these aids a man may be surrounded by, after all, the learning is that which he himself acquires. And, whether he be in college or out of college, in school or out of school, every man must educate himself.

AN absent-minded Georgia traveller put his only coat in his traveling-bag before retiring for the night. The next morning he couldn't remember what he had done with the garment, and consequently when he arrived at Atlanta, he walked coatless to the hotel. Some time afterwards, while searching for another missing article, he found the coat.

WHEN a man has no design but to speak plain truth, he may say a great deal in a very narrow compass.

THE DYING YEAR.

BY M. J. B.

The year now departing, how fleet it has woven,
With finger of light, its delicate woof!
Time's restive steed for ever is moving
Onward and onward with vigilant hoof.

Friends have gathered, and friends have departed,
Sorrows have threatened, then hastened away;
Sunbeams across our pathway have darted,
Glooming to purple in lengthening day.

Beautiful beings have bound in their tresses
Sprays of the orange-bough mingled with pearl;
Sweet, loving hearts, that were warm with caresses,
Vanishing, left but one radiant curl.

Hands that were warm with a truth how enduring,
Have chilled in our gaze, and been folded away;
Honor, its dearly-earned laurel securing,
Has drooped its high head full in victory's way.

Lands that were distant, now firmly united,
Linked by the lightning, one continent stand;
Sorrows are solaced, and wrongs have been righted,
All the world turns to our beautiful land.

Beautiful in the full favor of heaven,
Laden with bounty, and gifted with grace,
While at her feet every blessing is given,
And God's crowning seal marks our prosperous race.

SOME QUEER CURES.

We hear, every now and then, of new diseases, diseases of which our grandfathers were ignorant, caused by the "storm and stress" of these later days of steam and competition; but the principal ills to which flesh is heir have been with us since the unhappy day when Pandora's feminine curiosity burst all bounds.

And so, in all times, physicians have been in great request, and diseased and troubled man has sought for means to alleviate his pain.

In the first century of the Christian era there lived in Rome Caius Plinius Secundus. He was a good man and true, a scientist so far as his light went, and with a professional distrust for the prescriptions of those whom he called magicians, who strove to cure by spells, charms, and amulets.

And he set himself to make a collection of prescriptions for the benefit of the suffering Romans of his day, being careful only to insert those which had been duly recommended by the faculty.

This curious and interesting book was translated into English three years before the death of Queen Elizabeth, at which time there were great numbers of people who implicitly believed in the remedies there set down.

We venture, then, no apology in offering a few of Pliny's choicest prescriptions, so old that now they are new, serving them up in the old words.

Cæsar's hardy warriors must have known little of the excruciating twinges, the red-hot pinches of the gout; but the Romans of Pliny's day were a different race. Prosperity had sapped their manhood, indulgence their health and they were no strangers to the "rich man's disease."

Pliny confesses that "The time hath bin when it was no common disease, as now it is." He gives the subject the attention it demands, and says, speaking of gouty folk:

"It were very good for the easement of their griefe, eftsoons to lay thereto frogs, fresh and new taken; mary, the best way, by the direction of Physitians, is to split them through, and so apply them warm."

It was left to a later age to discover that frogs are cold-blooded.

Elsewhere he recommends a broth made of the sea-scorpion, "sodden with dill, parsley, coriander, and leeks, putting thereto oile and salt," and then, curiously enough, adds, "also the brothe or decoction of a tortoise," in other words, turtle soup!

"The "falling sickness," or epilepsy, that disease formerly known as possession by devils, is readily cured, according to Pliny, by any of the following simple prescriptions:

The juice of wild rue, the seed of "peniroiall," the wild poppy beaten in a mortar and mixed with white wine, a spoonful of fennel seeds; but these must be taken at certain periods of the moon, and "there is a deepe and settled opinion among men, if a man or woman do ordinarily take garlick with meat and drink they shall be cured of the disease."

A garland of violets, a drink composed of thyme, the juice of rue, squill vinegar, and decoctions and preparations of many other herbs and vegetables are mentioned.

These are simple enough and readily attainable; but other prescriptions are given of a more complicated nature. For instance:

"The braines of an asse first dried in the smoke of certain leaves"—here Pliny forgets his usual perspicacity and omits to say what leaves—"drunk to the weight of half an ounce every day in honied water, is good against the falling evil. Some give counsel to eat the heart of a black he asse, together with bread; but in any wise it must be done abroad in the open aire, and when the moon is but one or two days old at the most."

Do you suffer from ague? Then you must catch a viper, cut off his head, or take out his heart alive, and carry it about with you wrapped up in a "linnen" cloth. Or you can cut off the end of a mouse's nose and the very tips of his ears, being careful not to kill the mouse, and carry them about with you wrapped in a red cloth.

Fever receives the attention it deserves, being cured most by amulets and remedies to be worn round the neck; as, for instance, you are to take "the right eie of a wolfe, salt it, and so tie it about the necke, or hang it fast to any part of the person." Elephant's blood was invaluable, but if the squeamish should turn against the remedy, a poetic substitute is provided—"a lion heart steeped in oil of roses!"

Deafness was readily curable by a compound of "goosegrease, fresh butter, and tempered with myrrh and rue, or the fome that a horse doth froth, mixed with oil of roses."

A very rational remedy is recommended for toothache. "If one bite off a peece of some tree that hath been struck by lightning, provided always"—and here is the rub—"that he holds his hands behind him in so doing, the said peece of wood will take away the toothache!"

Headache was at once cured by having the forehead touched by "the trunke or snuffle of an elephant;" or, "if a man poure viniger upon the hooks and bindges of doors and make a liniment with the durt that cometh of the rust thereof, and therewith anoint the forehead" his headache is at once cured.

Should an accident occur in eating, Pliny is equal to the emergency. "If a peece of bread have gone wrong, or lie in the way readie to stop the breth, take the crums of the same loafe and put them into both the eares, you shall see it shall soone be gone, and do no further harm."

Of a similar nature is the following: "If any fish bone stick in the throat and will not remove, it shall incontinently goe downe if the party thus ready to be choked withall put his feet into cold water; but if some peece of any other bones be ready to choke one, make no more adoe, but take some little spile of the said bone, and lay them upon the head, and you shall see it pass away and doe no harm."

It seems incredible to us that remedies such as these could be gravely recommended and believed in, and yet such was the case.

Grains of Gold.

Affectation is at best a deformity.

Consideration is due to all things.

Man, man is thy brother, and thy father is God.

Utter not as true, that which you cannot vouch for.

The greatest of fools is he who imposes on himself.

Let your anger set with the sun but not rise with it.

There is a foolish corner even in the brain of the sage.

If you would teach secrecy to others begin with yourself.

In order to judge of another's feelings, remember your own.

Every day a life, a blank to be inscribed with gentle thoughts.

Poverty is the test of civility and the touchstone of friendship.

The secret of making one's self tiresome is not to know when to stop.

Pleasures are like poppies spread; you seize the flower, its bloom is shed.

Make the most of time, it flies away so fast; yet method will teach you to win time.

If we would amend the world we should mend ourselves: and teach our children to be, not what we are, but what they should be.

Femininities.

Mrs. M. Thomas is a practical shoemaker living in Kansas.

There are 11 466 female commercial travelers in this country.

The number of women who insure their lives is rapidly increasing.

A flirt's heart is like an omnibus—it always has room for one more.

There is very little fixed dirt that cannot be removed with salt and vinegar.

The last day of the year is a very popular time for espousals in Scotland.

A rainy day is as unlucky for a wedding in Indiana it is in most European countries.

Boston cooking schools have educated 1400 girls in the art of cooking during the last year.

An ingenious idea is a little paper-weight, a fac simile of an old-fashioned millstone, in solid white onyx.

More than 60 per cent. of adult English women, married and unmarried, are working for daily subsistence.

The beautiful in heart is a million times of more avail in securing domestic happiness than the beautiful in person.

Next to having a new bonnet herself a woman likes to have a chance to make fun of some other woman's headgear.

In the Sandwich Islands the natives paint their faces and knock out their front teeth in mourning for their friends.

The death in Brooklyn a few days ago of Miss Ida Bunnell, of Elizabeth, N. J., is said to have been due to a cat bite.

When there is love in the heart there are rainbows in the eyes, which cover every black cloud with gorgeous hues.

"B bbie, go out and tell Johnny to stop sling that saw." "He isn't sling a saw; it's Arabella singing to Mr. de Smack."

A pretty woman said the other night she didn't in the least mind being old, but it was the getting there that distressed her.

Ina Drake, aged 12, of Hakdus, Dakota, plowed 40 acres of land, thereby winning the title of "champion plow-girl of Lake county."

One of the best mediums for polishing brass work is a compound made of sweet oil and putty; after using it wash the article with soap and water.

He: "Can you tie a true lovers' knot, my dearf" She: "No," hiding her blushes with her fan; "but our new clergyman can do it very nicely."

Mrs. Smith, who is reading a humorous paper: "I don't see any fun in those jokes about big bills for ladies' hats." Mr. Smith: "I don't either."

Quantities of the women of fashion now keep a scrap-book, in which is carefully pasted and indexed every newspaper reference to their friends and themselves.

Friday is considered an unlucky day to wed in most countries, but in Scotland it is the lucky day of the week, by far the majority of weddings being celebrated on that day.

Plain girl, confidentially: "Last night Mr. Micefellow said I had the sweetest face he had ever gazed on." Sympathetic friend, fervently: "How he must love you!"

A young gentleman, who has just married a little under-sized beauty, says she would have been taller, but she is made of such precious materials that Nature could not afford it.

A "lady's companion" enterprise has been projected in London, its object being to supply ladies of the highest reputation to chaperone other ladies to theatres, concerts, shopping and so on.

She: "I must show you my new clock before you go." He (facetiously)—"Some of my friends tell me I am homely enough to stop a clock." She—"Oh, that won't matter! It can be started again."

You may rest upon this as an unfailing truth, that there neither is, nor ever was, any person remarkably ungrateful who was not also insufferably proud; nor any one proud who was not equally ungrateful.

Dutiful daughter: "Now, mother, don't ask me to marry that man! I admire and respect him, but I do not love him." Practical mother: "Oh, that don't matter. You won't see him often enough to grow tired of him. He's a politician."

Women have a much nicer sense of the beautiful than men. They are, by far, the safer umpires in matters of propriety and grace. A mere school-girl will be thinking and writing about the beauty of birds and blossoms, while her brother is robbing the nests and destroying the flowers.

Sunday-school scholar, who has been giving profound attention to the subject under discussion: "Teacher, you say we must always love our enemies. Now, s'pose two fellows love the same girl, and one gets her an' the other don't. Do you s'pose the one that gets left is going to love the one who gets the girl?" Teacher lost in meditation.

Down in Maryland, the other day, when Dr. Fulton married Miss White, the ring used was made of a gold button that was on the wedding-gown of the bridegroom's mother, and a marvellously tattered shoe was sent by an old darkey along with the information that it was one of the last pair that "marster," the bride's father, bought for him in slavery times, and so he wanted it hung after young mistress to insure her good luck.

Mrs Veragrande: "Oh! I know that Mrs. Upetart is just green with envy this day." Sympathizing Friend: "Indeed! Why? Mrs. Veragrande: "You remember, we were both married in the same church, and her wedding was ever so much finer than mine, and she knew it, too. I'd just like to see her now tearing her hair with envy when she thinks that my husband had the biggest funeral of the year, and, with her husband just wallowing in health, she can't equal it for years yet."

Masculinities.

Books are lighthouses erected in the great sea of time.

If a man blows his own trumpet, can his opinions be sound?

He who throws himself under the bench will be left to lie there.

One million dollars of gold coin weight 3,868 pounds avoirdupois.

Many people are lost in thought through being incapable of thinking.

It takes a smart man to conceal from others what he don't know.

One million dollars of silver coin weight 58,920 pounds avoirdupois.

Never speak or act in anger until you have prayed over your words or acts.

Measure 299 feet on each side and you will have a square acre within an inch.

Successful love takes a load off our hearts, and put it upon our shoulders.

Never retort a sharp or angry word. It is the second word that makes the quarrel.

To cure deafness in a man, begin to whisper to him about a chance to make his fortune.

Were we as eloquent as angels, we should please some more by listening than by talking.

He is rich whose income is more than his expenses, and he poor whose expenses exceed his income.

When men are sorely urged and pressed they find in themselves a power which they thought they had not.

I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of twenty to follow my own teaching.

Lives there a man with soul so dead, who ever to himself has said, the best of all is the baker's bread?

Gold and silver cigar boxes are now being made with a receptacle inside to hold a suspicious looking little flask.

What purports to be the milk of human kindness frequently turns out to be merely a chalk and water imitation.

Silence is a trick when it imposes Pedants and scholars, churchmen and physicians, abound in silent pride.

It was said of one who remembered everything he lent, but nothing that he borrowed, that he had lost half his memory.

There are few things more painful than the effort of a man using a word, of whose pronunciation he is doubtful, to appear accustomed.

A young man ought not to propose too gracefully. If he does the girl may get the idea that he has had more practice than she deems desirable.

There is this benefit in brag, that the speaker is unconsciously expressing his own ideal. Humor him by all means, draw it all out, and hold him to it.

Love seizes on us suddenly, without giving warning, and our disposition or our weakness favors the surprise; one look, one glance, from the fair fixes and determines us.

A brute of a bachelor, on being informed that "marriages are made in heaven," said he wished that a prohibitive duty had prevented their export from the place of their manufacture.

A blind mendicant who frequents the Rue St. Honore has the following announcement affixed to his bosom:—"Blind! Father of four children, the result of a terrible accident!"

Prepare yourself for the world, as the athletes used to do for their exercises; oil your mind and your manners to give them the necessary suppleness and flexibility; strength alone will not do.

A New Bedford, Mass., citizen, who lost a $10 bill several months ago, has just received it from the finder, with a note saying: "I needed it very badly at the time and returned it as soon as I could."

Dumley (to Brown)—"Brown, I understand that Robinson referred to me yesterday as an old fool. I don't think that sort of thing is right." Brown—"Why, of course, it ain't right, Dumley. You can't be more than 40 at the outside."

An assistant to a Connecticut plumber poured a small quantity of water into a pot of hot lead, in order to satisfy a doubt in his mind as to what the effect would be. He wasn't seriously injured, but is likely to carry a reminder of the experiment to the grave with him.

A St. Louis man furnishes a hint for baldheaded people. A few years ago, finding that he was getting bald, he discontinued wearing his hat while in his office. Then he began a systematic "dry scrub" of his head daily, with a coarse brush. He has now, it is told, a very satisfactory crop of new hair.

Blinks, after inviting his friend Jinks, who has just returned from abroad, to dinner, is telling him what a fine memory his little son Bobby has. "And do you suppose he will remember me?" said Jinks. "Remember you! Why, he remembers every face that he ever saw." An hour later they enter the house, and after Jinks has shaken hands with Mrs. Blinks, he calls Bobby over to him. "And do you remember me, my little man?" "Course I do! You're the same feller that pa brought home last summer, and ma was so mad about it that she didn't speak to pa for a whole week."

"Were you in the fight?" said an officer to an elderly negro on a steamer after taking a fort. "Had a little taste of it, sah." "Stood your ground, did you?" "No, sah; I runs." "Run at the first fire, did you?" "Yes, sah; would hab run sooner if I had known it was comin'." "Why, that's not very creditable to your courage." "Dat isn't my line, sah—cookin's my perfession." "Well, but have you no regard for your reputation?" "Reputation's nothin' to me by the side ob life." "Do you consider your life worth more than other people's?" "It's worth more to me, sah."

Recent Book Issues.

Of late years art publications have made such immense strides that works are now put within the reach of thousands at a moderate price, which were as far beyond the attainment of the generation gone-by, as was the speed of our locomotive by their stage-coach or diligence. To possess a number of really good engravings in those times was generally regarded as a proof of both education and station. This state of affairs was due primarily to the fact that etching and other superior forms of engraving, so to speak, had not come into common use among artists, and art ideas had not entered so greatly into the instruction and entertainment of the people. At the present day, however, publishers have recognized the growing demand for fine, original work of art given out at a fair rate and the leading houses have used their best efforts to satisfy it. Stokes & Bro., New York, stand among the leaders in this respect in their splendid folio, entitled "Important New Etchings by American Artists," the text including a short sketch on etching by Ripley Hitchcock. The etchings include original plates by C. A. Platt, J. D. Smillie, W. St. John Harper, E. W. Kemble, C. D. Weldon, O. H. Bacher, and J. A. Mitchell. The subjects are "The East River from Brooklyn," "What O'clock is It?" "Lucile," "Tokens," "Sailing Toy Yachts in Central Park, March," and "A Political Marriage." There is no need of saying anything further in their praise than that they are thoroughly effective productions in a purely art sense, and are calculated to charm from their pictorial effect alone. Either to the art student, the collector of picture gems, or the lover of the beautiful in any sense, the work is a treasure. In character of paper, printing, binding and other more material accessories, it worthily sets off its contents. For sale by Lippincott & Co. Price $10.00.

Frederick A. Stokes & Bros., New York, issue some of the prettiest of the holiday books that come to the Philadelphia book stores. A large percentage of the pretty productions which carry Christmas greetings bear their imprint. One of the most notable of the whole very notable lot, is "The Babies of the Year," a magnificent series of twelve splendid water color pictures of little ones drawn and painted with rare naturalness and beauty. Maud Humphrey is the artist and Edith M. Thomas has furnished appropriate verses for the pictures. Each painting is supposed to represent the ideal child of one particular month. It is altogether a book that lovers of children will prize for its own sake as well as for those it honors so worthily. Beautifully bound in colored, illuminated binding. Price $1 50. Another of their fine publications, though not strictly in the holiday line is "The Game of Chess," in which the rules and partial history of that game are clearly explained by a series of simple rules, diagrams and examples. Price 50 cents. Both of these books are for sale by Lippincott & Co.

"Nye and Riley's Railway Guide," by Edgar W. ("Bill") Nye and James Whitcomb Riley ("The Hoosier Poet"). The book is the joint production of these popular humorists, and it stands alone and unapproached. Its humor is fine, clean, and fascinating; it contains the best efforts of its authors. Mr. Riley furnishes the poetry and Nye the prose. The title of the book is purposely misleading, as it seems to be a trick of the wits to spring a joke where it is least expected. The book is not a guide of any kind unless it be to good humor, a hearty laugh, a hearty meal, sound sleep, peace, and prosperity. The Dearborn Publishing Co., Chicago. Cloth $1 00. Paper 50 cents.

"Temple House," a novel, by Elizabeth Stoddard which enjoyed much success on its first appearance, has been released by Cassell & Co. in their Sunshine Series of Choice Fiction. For sale by Lippincott.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The December *Magazine of American History* is a Washington number. It opens with "The Inauguration of Washington in 1789," by Mrs. Lamb, the editor, containing much valuable information on the event. The Rembrandt Peale portraits of George and Martha Washington, accompany Mrs. Lamb's article. The next paper is on the "Holdings of the French Canadians." Shirley Carter Hughson writes of "Francis Marion's Grave," and Prof. E. W. Gilliam contributes a spirited article on the "French Colony in San Domingo." M. M. Baldwin writes of the "Declaration of Independence," and Col. Stone's "Trip from New York to Virginia in 1829," is continued. Moncure D. Conway has a curious page on the origin of the epithet, "The Father of His Country." Among the short contributions is one from Katharine Armstrong, of London, England, on "The Anglo-Americans;" an unpublished letter by S. R. Mallory, secretary of the Confederate navy, 1861, about the purchase of the ship Trent; a letter from Richard Henry Lee, in 1782; two unpublished letters of Washington and other Washingtoniana. Published at 743 Broadway, New York.

The *Record* Almanac, just out, contains the usual complete information concerning Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, with valuable tables for reference, election and sporting statistics, household hints, and a great variety of other useful knowledge.

Most complexion powders have a vulgar glare, but Pozzoni's is a pure beautifier whose effects are lasting.

MODES OF WALKING.—Observing persons move slow; their hands move alternately from side to side, while they occasionally stop and turn around.

Careful persons lift their feet high and place them down, pick up some little obstruction, and place it down quietly by the side of the way.

Calculating persons generally walk with their hands in their pockets and their heads slightly inclined.

Modest persons generally step softly for fear of being observed.

Timid persons often step off the pavement on meeting another, and always go around a stone instead of stepping over it.

Wide-awake persons always "toe out," and have a long swing of their arms, while their hands move about miscellaneously.

Lazy persons scrape about loosely with their heels, and are first on one side of the pavement and then on the other.

Very strong-minded persons place their toes directly in front of them, and have a kind of stamp movement.

Unstable persons walk fast and slowly by turns.

Venturous persons try all roads, frequently climbing the fences instead of going through the gate, and never let down the bars.

One-idea persons, and also very selfish ones, "toe in."

Cross persons are very apt to hit their knees together.

Good-natured persons snap their fingers every few steps.

Fun loving persons have a kind of jig movement.

THE PHILISTINE.—A nineteenth century "Philistine is the embodiment of what Carlyle called respectability with its thousand gigs," or, as he elsewhere puts it "gigmanity. But though Carlyle inveighed against the class, he coined no word to define its members.

Matthew Arnold introduced the term "Philistine" in 1865 as a translation of the German Philister, which is applied by students in Germany, to all who are not, and never have been, members of a university. He protested against Carlyle's misuse of the word "respectable"—a misuse of which Barham is also guilty in the words: "No doubt he's a very respectable man, but, I can't say much for his taste." which also define a "Philistine"—and said, "if the English are ever to have a word for the thing we are speaking of, I think we had better take the word 'Philistine' itself. 'Philistine' must have originally meant in the minds of those who invented the nickname, strong, dogged, unenlightened opponents of the chosen people. The representatives of the modern spirit regarded themselves, with the robust self-confidence natural to reformers, as a chosen people, as children of the light. They regarded their adversaries as humdrum people, slaves to routine, enemies to light—stupid and oppressive, but at the same time very strong.'

And so "Philistine" came to mean one whose ideas are material and commonplace as opposed to one who aims at a loftier ideal of intellectual life.

HOW TO TEST A FRIEND.—Study what your dog thinks of him.

See if he offers to lend more than you ask.

Note how long he remembers what he has done for you.

Give him an opportunity to better himself at your expense.

See if he breaks an appointment to go elsewhere.

When you have accomplished anything together note how much credit he takes to himself.

Inconvenience him and see if he mentions it to his friends.

Offer him the chance to escort home the pretty girl you met at your cousin's.

Judge him by what he does rather than by what he says.

Always be short when he asks for a loan.

Give him an opportunity to anticipate the favor you are about to ask.

DIET OF THE ANCIENTS.—The difference between the diet of the ancients and that of us moderns is very striking. The ancient Greeks and Romans used no alcoholic liquor, it being unknown to them, nor coffee, nor tea, nor chocolate, nor sugar, nor butter; for Galen informs us that he had seen butter but once in his life.

They were ignorant of the greater number of our tropical spices, as clove, nutmeg, mace, ginger, Jamaica pepper, curry, pimento. They used neither buckwheat, nor French beans, nor spinach, nor sago, nor tapioca, salad, arrowroot, nor potato or its varieties, not even the common, but a sort of marshgrown bean; not many of our fruits, as the orange, tamarind, or American maize.

On the other hand, they ate substances which we now neglect—the mallow, herb, ox-tongue, the sweet acorn, the lupin. They liked the flesh of wild asses, dogs, the dormouse, the fox and the bear.

WE should hold fast to principle at all cost, and work directly in the line of our best ideals; thus will our conscience be clear, our characters fruitful to the best results.

SHORTNESS OF BREATH, with failing strength, and wasting of flesh, accompanied by a Constant Cough, all indicate Lungs more or less seriously affected, demanding treatment at once. By using rationally Dr. Jayne's Expectorant, the worst results may be either avoided or palliated.

SPEND WISELY.—Look most to your actual spending. No matter what comes in, if more goes out you will always be poor. The art is not in making money, but in keeping it; little expenses, like mice in a barn, when they are many, make great waste. Hair by hair, heads get bald; straw by straw the thatch goes off the cottage; and drop by drop, the rain comes into the chamber.

A barrel is soon empty, if the tap leaks out but a drop a minute. When you mean to save, begin with your mouth; there are many thieves down the red lane. The ale-jug is a great waste. In all other things keep within compass. Never stretch your legs further than the blankets will reach, or you will soon be cold. In clothes, choose suitable and lasting stuff, and not tawdry fineries. To be warm is the main thing, never mind the looks.

A fool may make money, but it takes a wise man to spend it. Remember, it is easier to build two chimneys than to keep one going. If you give all to back and board, there is nothing left for the savings bank. Fare hard and work hard while you are young; and you have a chance to rest when you are old.

THE OLD SHOE.—The custom of throwing one or more old shoes after the bride and bridegroom when starting on their wedding journey, is so old that the memory of man stretches not back to its beginning.

Some think it represents an assault, and is a lingering trace of the custom among savage nations of carrying away the bride by violence; others think that it is a relic of the ancient law of exchange or purchase, and that it formerly implied the surrender by the parents of all dominion or authority over their daughter.

It has a likeness to a Jewish custom mentioned in the Bible.

Thus in Deuteronomy we read that when the brother of a dead man refused to marry his widow, she asserted her independence of him by "loosing his shoe."

It was also the custom of the middle ages to place the husband's shoe on the head of the nuptial couch, in token of his denomination.

THE wisest fellows, we think, are those who agree with us.

Wanamaker's.

PHILADELPHIA, December 17 1888.

SILK IS COLD. YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE SNUGGLING up to the common run of Silk Mufflers or Silk Handkerchiefs in chilly weather. It takes a big slice of wit on the maker's part to get up a soft, warm silk. No one equals Brocklehurst in that. His "London-made" Mufflers (really made in Macclesfield) have crowded "satin-finished" and the whole covey of stiff, dressing-loaded styles to one side. Some very good Mufflers, though, that never saw England—almost as cashmerey in finish. There's a Chinese imitation, heavy twilled, pure silk, that's singularly soft.

Chinese Imitation English Mufflers, 75c. each.
English Mufflers $1, $1 25, $1 50, $1 75, $2, $2 50.
Same, extra heavy, 35 inches square, $2 50—almost 4 ounces of pure silk.
Domestic Mufflers, 65c. to $2 each.
French Mufflers, $1 and $1 25 each.
Colored Mufflers, 65c. to $2 each.
Printed Cashmere Mufflers (wool, cotton warp), 25c. to 75c. each.
Silk and Cotton Mufflers, satin stripes, 75c. each.

SILVER PLATED WARE THAT CAN RAISE A SOLID doubt in a burglar's mind is good enough for anybody. There's plenty of such ware. Plenty more that's shadow washed and thin at that. There's where the risk to you comes in.

You must buy of a dealer whose word means something, or take chances.

"A 1" in silver plate doesn't mean what it does in ships; "double" is better, "triple" better still.

Such work as Rogers Brothers' "1847 Imperial" is at the top in either grade. It's a rare thing when you can get a piece of that stamp under price. The last time to look for such a chance with Christmas one week off. The chance is here, just the same. Fresh, perfect goods On the counters this morning. Prices are by the dozen:

	A 1		DOUBLE		TRIPLE	
	were	now	were	now	were	now
Teaspoons	$2 70	$1 70	$3 25	$2 25	$4 00	$3 00
Dessertspoons	4 50	3 25	5 75	4 00	7 00	4 75
Tablespoons	5 25	3 50	6 50	4 50	8 00	5 75
Forks	4 50	3 50	5 75	4 50	7 00	5 75

Sort of house-warming for silverware in its new place, second floor.

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GOOD SENSE
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BEST for Health and Comfort

PERFECT FIT for all ages.

THOUSANDS must be seen by BEAUTIFUL WOMEN and HEALTHY CHILDREN.

Satisfaction guaranteed or money returned.

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Lumbago, Rheumatism,
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Toothache, Influenza,
Difficult Breathing,
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The following was received by mail through W. H. Blyth, Druggist, Mt. Pleasant, Texas.

MR. W. H. BLYTH—Sir: "In compliance with your request to furnish you with the results of my knowledge and experience with Dr. Radway's R. R. R. in reply I can state that I have been using Radway's Remedies since 1852. I know the Ready Relief to be more reliable for Colds, Pleurisy, Pneumonia and diseases growing out of colds; for Cuts, Bruises, Sprains, Rheumatism and Aches, and pains generally, than any remedy I have ever known tried. From my personal knowledge of the Radway Remedies, I think them all superior to any remedies of which I have any knowledge, for all the ills for which they are recommended.

Respectfully,
T. R. SKIDMORE,
Pastor Green Hill Presbyterian Church.

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THE SAFEST AND MOST CERTAIN
PAIN REMEDY

In the world, that instantly stops the most excruciating pains. It never fails in giving ease to the sufferer of pain from whatever cause arising; it is truly the great

CONQUEROR OF PAIN!

And has done more good than any known remedy.

For headache (whether sick or nervous), toothache, neuralgia, rheumatism, lumbago, sprains, bruises, bites of insects, stiff neck, pains and weakness in the back, spine or kidneys, pains around the liver, pleurisy, swelling of the joints and pains of all kinds, the application of Radway's Ready Relief will afford immediate ease, and its continued use for a few days effect a permanent cure.

Inflammation of the Kidneys, Inflammation of the Bladder, Inflammation of Bowels, Congestion of the Lungs, Sore Throat, Difficult Breathing, Croup, Catarrh, Influenza, Headache, Toothache, Neuralgia, Rheumatism, Cold Chills, Ague Chills, Chilblains, Frost-bites.

The application of the Ready Relief to the part or parts where the difficulty or pain exists will afford ease and comfort.

INTERNALLY, a half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will in a few minutes cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Colic, Flatulency, and all internal pains.

Travelers should always carry a bottle of RADWAY'S READY RELIEF with them. A few drops in water will prevent sickness or pains from change of water. It is better than French Brandy or Bitters as a stimulant.

Fifty cents per bottle. Sold by druggists.

DR. RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS
The Great Liver Remedy.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet gum, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse and strengthen. DR. RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the stomach, liver, bowels, kidneys, bladder, nervous diseases, loss of appetite, headache, costiveness, indigestion, dyspepsia, biliousness, fever, inflammation of the bowels, piles, and all derangements of the internal viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals, or, deleterious drugs.

PERFECT DIGESTION

Will be accomplished by taking Radway's Pills. By so doing

SICK HEADACHE

Dyspepsia, Foul Stomach, Biliousness, will be avoided, and the food that is eaten contribute its nourishing properties for the support of the natural waste of the body.

☞ Observe the following symptoms resulting from diseases of the digestive organs: Constipation, inward piles, fulness of blood in the head, acidity of the stomach, nausea, heartburn, disgust of food, fulness of weight in the stomach, sour eructations, sinking or fluttering of the heart, choking or suffocating sensations when in a lying posture, dimness of vision, dots or webs before the sight, fever and dull pain in the head, deficiency of perspiration, yellowness of the skin and eyes, pain in the side, chest, limbs, and sudden flashes of heat, burning in the flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above-named disorders.

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DR. RADWAY'S PILLS are a cure for this complaint. They restore strength to the stomach, and enable it to perform its function. The symptoms of Dyspepsia disappear, and with them the liability of the system to contract diseases.

"Your Pills have done me more good (for Dyspepsia) than all the doctor's medicine that I have taken." ROBERT A. PAGE.
NEWPORT, KY.

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WILLIAM HOONAN.
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"Used to suffer greatly from biliousness and Sick Headache, until I tried your Pills. They are the best I ever tried."
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Send a letter stamp to DR. RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren street, New York. Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.

Be sure and ask for RADWAY'S, and see that the name "RADWAY" is on what you buy.

Humorous.

AGREED.

A man once loved a maid,
As foolish men will do,
To win her he essayed,
But when he came to woo,
And fell upon his luckless knees,
To all his wild, impassioned pleas
She only answered, "Strange!"

He urged his suit with zeal,
But all without success;
His eloquent appeal
Brought him no happiness.
For when he vowed he loved her so,
His passion she could never know,
She only said, "That's queer!"

And so he vainly plead
That wretched summer's day;
No matter what the lover said,
That's all the girl would say.
She kept exclaiming Strange! and Queer!
Till finally he said, "Well, dear,
I think it's odd myself!"

—U. N. None.

Late habits—Night gowns.

A star of the evening—A policeman.

Court plasters—Awards for damages.

The first board of education—The blackboard.

Pleading at the bar—Begging for a drink.

Waiter's epitaph—He couldn't wait any longer, so he went.

When is a nutmeg like a prison window?—When it is grated.

The sieve through which the man strained every nerve is for sale.

An unfortunate listener begs for some one to invent a "noiseless hand-organ."

The man whose head was fairly turned says it feels very uncomfortable in that position.

A Camden man is so honest that he never changes his boarding place until after dark.

"Mary, my love, this apple dumpling is not half done." "Well, finish it then, my dear."

The saying that "there is more pleasure in giving than receiving" is supposed to apply to kicks, medicine and advice.

An undertaker, having apartments to let, pasted his bills upon the coffins in the windows, announcing, "Lodgings for single gentlemen."

Variety is charming. Landlord, to tenant: "What wine do you drink, Mr. Chawbacks?" Mr. C.: "Well, thankye, sir, I'm havin' a little of all as comes round."

Leader of the Boggsville Male Quintette to editor of the Boggsville Herald: "What can we do to interest the public in our organization?" Editor: "Disband."

Housekeeper, negotiating for a pair of ducks: "But you don't weigh the head and feet, do you?" Butcher: "Oh, yes, mum; we weigh everything but the quack."

A fellow in Indiana put one end of a gun-barrel in the fire and looked down the muzzle to see if it was loaded. A coroner's jury decided that his suspicions were correct.

Johnny: "Tommy, let's put our pennies together and buy ma a nice Christmas present." Tommy: "All right." "What shall it be?" "I guess we had better get her a padded slipper."

A certain clergyman, who recently had an overcoat and umbrella stolen from his hall, thinks that the thief is likely to turn up in the world where neither overcoat nor umbrella will be essential to comfort.

Elementary mathematics. Teacher: "Tommy, what is half of eight?" Pupil: "Sideways or top?" Teacher. "What do you mean?" Pupil: "Why, half from the top of 8 is 0, and half sideways is 3."

Hanover Squeer: "It would be a good thing for that young Jack Dorr if the conceit were knocked out of him." Parke Rowe: "Merciful powers! There wouldn't be enough of him left to hang clothes on!"

Old lady, to grocer's boy: "Be them eggs on the counter fresh, young feller?" Boy: "Yes'm." Old lady: "How long have they been laid?" Boy: "Not very long, ma'am. I laid 'em there myself less'n half an hour ago."

"Professor," said a student in pursuit of knowledge concerning the habits of animals, "why does a cat, while eating, turn her head first one way and then the other?" "For the reason," replied the professor, "that she cannot turn it both ways at once."

Mark Twain thinks that soda water is not reliable for a steady drink. It is too gassy. The next morning, after drinking 30 bottles, he found himself full of gas and as light as a balloon. He hadn't an article of clothing he could wear, except an umbrella.

Tramp, to partner: "Did the old man give you anythin', Bill?" Partner: "No." "What did you say to him?" "I asked him if he couldn't help a poor man who was out of work, and he said he could give me some work. Times seems to be gettin' wuss every day."

What ways! "Mamma!" "Well, my dear?" "What awfully queer ways these Western folks do have, don't they? I have been reading an article in the Stock Breeders' Gazette that papa brought home, and it says that cows should have their corn fed to them in the ear!"

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Scottish Vengeance.—An instance in early training, about which there may be some doubts, is to be found among the Barrington family records.

A great aunt of his avowed to avenge the murder of her husband, who was hung before her eyes because she would not give up her castle; her opponents had given her the choice between surrendering her castle and seeing her husband hung, and she replied with dignity to the messenger:

"Mark the words of Elizabeth Fitzgerald, of Moret Castle; they may serve for your own wife on some future occasion. I won't render my keep, and I will tell you why; Elizabeth Fitzgerald may get another husband, but Elizabeth Fitzgerald may never get another castle, so I'll keep what I have got."

Evidently his great aunt was a shrewd, practical woman. The result of her answer was, that in half an hour her husband was swinging before her gate.

She then called up her young son, and showing him his dangling parent, made him swear vengeance on the murderers. The oath having been duly taken, she said to the servants:

"Now take the boy, and duck him head over heels in the horsepond."

Thus the oath and its consequences were fully impressed on the boy's mind, and no sooner had he come to years of discretion than four of the hostile family were missed in one night.

An Indian Legend.—When the lofty and barren mountain was first lifted into the sky, and from its elevation looked down on the plains below, and saw the valley and the less elevations covered with verdant and fruitful trees, it sent up to Brahma something like a murmur of complaint.

"Why thus barren? Why these scarred and naked sides exposed to the eye of man?"

And Brahma answered: "The very light shall clothe thee, and the shadow of the passing cloud shall be as a royal mantle. More verdure would be less light. Thou shalt share in the azure of heaven, and the youngest and whitest cloud of a summer's sky shall nestle in thy bosom. Thou belongest half to us." And so was the mountain dowered.

And so, too, adds the legend, have the loftiest minds of men been dowered in all ages. To lower elevation have been the pleasant verdure, the vine and olive. Light—light alone, and the deep shadows of the passing clouds—these are given to the prophets of the race.

The Make of Sausages:—Said I, jokingly, writes a correspondent the other day to an Italian: "Our sausages are made you know, of cats and dogs and horses." He didn't know that I was joking, and he rejoined, seriously: "We use donkey!" "What!" I exclaimed. "Certainly!" he returned; "it's donkey that gives the distinctive character to our salmi." This, I find, is a fact, so far, at least, as some varieties of the Italian sausages are concerned; and this perhaps, explains why the spectacle of a dead donkey is proverbially such a rarity. It is snapped up at once by Italians who have an eye to salmi.

"John," she said softly, "have you been saying anything about me to mother lately?" "No," replied John. "Why do you ask?" "Because she said this morning she believed you were on the eve of proposing to me. Now, I do not wish you to speak to mother when you have anything of that kind to say. Speak to me, and I'll manage the business with mother." And John said he would.

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A clergyman, after years of suffering from that loathsome disease, Catarrh, and vainly trying every known remedy, at last found a recipe which completely cured and saved him from death. Any sufferer from this dreadful disease sending a self addressed stamped envelope to Prof. J. A. Lawrence, 50 Warren St., New York City, will receive the recipe free of charge.

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"NEVER SEE THE BEAT ON'T."

"I tell you what, Elder, I never see the beat on't," said Deacon Stubbs, as he leaned over the fence to chat with the parson. "Never see nothin' like it afore. Like that med'cin, I mean, that my son Samuel sent down to mother from the city this spring. The old lady's been feelin' kind o' down't the heel all winter. Said she guessed she was goin' to give out. Couldn't eat nothin' cause it didn't taste good and didn't seem to relish. Couldn't sleep nuther an' she got awful downhearted. Kep' a hackin' a good 'eal, an' said she felt just as if suthin had took all the tuck out of her some way. Samuel, he's smart and sharp as he is my son, and sez he, 'Mother you need suthin to cleanse out your blood an' enrich it. It's weak. An' your liver's out o' kilter, too, I reckon. I'll fix that for ye. I'll send down a bottle of stuff that'll hev you around again in no time. You'll be as spry an' chipper as ever in less'n a week after you've begun takin' it.' An' I swan, Elder, it did just as he said it would. The old lady's feelin' peart's you please a'ready. What's the name on't? Let me see—O, I've got it, it's the Golden Medical Discovery and its put up by a doctor by the name o' Pierce in Buf'lo. I dunno nothn' about him, but he makes a jofired good med'cine, and don't you forgit it."

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GENTLEMEN'S HAIR CUTTING AND SHAVING.
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Latest Fashion Phases.

The galons intended to add to the splendor of evening gowns are composed of tinsel thread, formed into twisted bullion, such as is employed on uniforms, only that, instead of being merely gold or silver, the floral designs are carried out in all their natural tints, slightly subdued by age—the tones, that the period of the Grand Monarque and his two immediate successors have left behind them.

The width of such trimmings is from three to four inches, ribbon like, but slightly waved at each edge, the flowers standing out in relief.

In one design there will be a combination of heliotrope, old pink, bronze, golden browns, blue and silver, but in no way gaudy, though the colors are so profusely used.

In looking at such trimmings, the mind involuntarily associates them with Moorish pale moonlight, or summer sunlight viewed through a painted window in a cathedral where no new stained glass had found admittance.

There is an infinite variety in amalgamation of colors even in one design, and where some one predominance of pinky reds, others display a China blue as the ruling hue, while sometimes the pattern is confined to all gold or all silver, though in the gold there will be three distinct tones, one bright, one dull, and one coppery. The coloring in nearly all the new trimmings is purely Pompadour.

Another galon has an almost imperceptible groundwork of velvet, with an architectural design, inspired surely by the decorated church windows of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, blended with arabesque suggestions.

To produce an effect, certainly most beautiful and pleasing to the artistic eye, braid is intermixed with the cord, and some of the interstices filled in with some crochet stitches worked in metal threads.

All trimming of this class is in applique order, so that when sewn on they almost appear to be embroidered on the material, like the tracery of the Gothic windows. The braid set on edge is capable of giving far more effect than when laid on flat, and it is thus better used.

The Greek pattern plays an important part too, because, where the Pompadour element does not assert itself, the Directoire comes in, and in that Greek art was much to the fore.

One good pattern has the Greek key carried out in gold-lined crystal beads—Toca beads they are called—laid diagonally over an under-padding, with green, pink and other beads between; shamrocks have been utilized, too.

Perhaps, however, the gem of one collection was a wide guipure; eight inches in depth displaying a blaze of cleverly blended colors. There was a narrow width to match, intended to lay around the skirt, which is the fashionable way of trimming now.

Another perfect one had a design of wheat sheaves worked in straw, with an intermixture of gold steel and silver.

But there are other kinds of trimmings.

Mantles are loaded, perhaps overloaded with them, so that little of the foundation shows.

Seen apart from what they are destined to trim, the jet appears most important, the collar, epaulettes, back and front ornaments forming one piece, and light almost as the traditional feather, for such jet work is rather an embroidery than a passementerie, and is finely cut and surrounded by a sparkling shower of fringe and tassels, which fall in glittering cascades over the breast, back and shoulders, and coming down nearly to the elbow beneath the positive epaulette. Sometimes the arm passes through an aperture in the design.

Here crochet again plays a part, for rings worked over silk and beads appear in many of the new patterns, while in other places bretelles of such rings are the only supplement to the epaulettes, which are flat and not stuffed, as they were worn in the Medici period.

The fashions, at all events in embroidery are all intended for thin women, notably a skirt trimming, viz., a waved band coming low on the hips as though concealing the join of the bodice and skirt as when the justau corps were worn.

From this band, which is broken up into four or more scrolls, falls at the side and back a shower of scintillating bead fringe, and the idea is repeated and diversified in endless variety.

Colored stripe and plaids are shown both separate and together; for instance, there are fine silk and wool goods with plaided stripes of great width alternating with plain stripes, and there are gay tartan plaid stripes on grounds of most quiet colors.

Rough woolens in very large plaids are considered stylish in dark dull greens, and in combinations of green with gray or green with brown, blue with brown, or blue with purplish red shades. Indeed, all dull-colored plaids are about to be revived.

Large *panaches* of feathers, clusters of tips, and demi-long and long ostrich plumes are restored to favor for trimming large hats.

The crowns are usually low, but not always, as the velvet is sometimes puffed high to form a top trimming. Blue lophophore and brown pheasants' feathers are shaped to form flat facings or wide brims or to cover the outside of the brim, while velvet is put next to the face, and the low crown is also made entirely of feathers.

Bonnets are larger than they have been for some time, and the actual shape of the bonnet is extremely flat, though the trimming gives the appearance of height.

Very full fronts are worn, the velvet or trimming being ruffled in the brim, rather than arranged in stiff folds, in a design with a plain edge. A bow is usually placed under the brim in front.

Strings are now made either of very narrow velvet or of ribbon four or five inches wide.

A very elegant and stylish bonnet of dark velvet, was made with twists and folds of light colored velvet across the front and down either side just back of the brim. The trimming consisted of fine ostrich plumes and aigrettes.

Another velvet bonnet had the crown covered with a large piece of velvet laid in plaits which stood up over the top of the bonnet like ribbon bows.

The edge of the brim was finished with very elaborate beaded passementerie. Inside of the brim was a full garniture of made feather trimming, filling the entire front, from the edge of the brim to the hair. The strings were of wide ribbon tied in a small bow.

A pretty little bonnet was of fancy velvet. The brim was of the plain, the crown of the fancy goods. The trimming consisted of folds and loops of the plain velvet. A very full bunch of fine ostrich plumes covered the front of the brim. Ribbon strings tied in a small bow.

A rather quaint little bonnet was of felt braid. It had a full-shirred front, trimming is set under the brim, also a couple of very small ostrich tips which fell over the top of the hair. The bonnet was trimmed with wide ribbon loops. Long ends came down the sides of the bonnet and formed strings.

For winter nightgowns there are some delightfully cosy ones of cream and pale pink flannel, trimmed with lace and ribbons.

Also some charming little toilet jackets of colored flannel, with full vests of narrow white and colored striped flannel, flanked by rows of feather stitching in white and with large cuffs and collars.

The half-long sleeves of the dressy evening corsages admit of many fancy arrangements.

When of black or white lace they are trimmed with ribbon epaulettes, bands of velvet crossing the sleeves diagonally, and also the arrangements to produce the effect of lace puffings, or embroidered tabs, with long strings of beads like a heavy fringe depending from them in Eastern fashion.

Nods and Nods.

OF ART DECORATIONS.

In these days of art decoration and superior sewing, patchwork is looked upon with horror by a great many people, but not so by all, for at all industrial exhibitions, fancy bazaars and charity sales this branch of handiwork is always well displayed in many forms and varieties.

It is a source of deep pleasure to many a sick person or crippled child, and though the Lady Bountiful may try to raise the standard, she cannot eradicate the much-admired and highly-prized patchwork.

Since crazy patchwork came to us in all its wild vagaries, many have been the imitations of it, and some have been most ingenious.

At a recent show of work a child's cot quilt was sent in for exhibition, composed of crazy patchwork on one side, with every single piece ornamented with some device in colored silks, while the other side was of scraps of velvet of every imaginable color, arranged in the diamond star design. It was a wonderful specimen of industry and perseverance—the work of a young milliner in her spare time.

Another bed coverlid, recently seen in the room of a young girl, was in crazy patchwork, but the colors were restricted to gold white and cream. All were worked with gold floselle, and joined together with a feather stitching of the same.

The peculiarity consisted in the pieces being all worked by herself and friends, in half a yard square sections. Several friends worked on one section, inscribing their names on one scrap, their favorite flower, or some device on others, adhering all the time to the gold floselle.

Every section was neatly joined, and when the quilt was complete a band of gold colored plush, about a quarter of a yard wide, bordered it all round. The lining was of gold-colored sateen. The effect was extremely good, and the study of it most amusing. This may be a hint to some patchworker.

Very many years ago it was the custom for a set of friends to work, in fine cross-stitches, squares of canvas, which were afterwards joined to form the border of a cloth, or velvet tablecloth, owned by one of the number; and a bride used sometimes to get her friends to do this as a memento of past friendship.

Many old ladies have, doubtless, some relic of their youth in this style; it is not a novel one, but—as so many things are now—a revival.

Apropos of quilts, it is much the fashion now to buy the white linen tablecloths worked with gold-colored silk; which are quite moderate in price, add a very wide border of gold-colored or golden-brown plush, then a tail of coarse cream lace, and lay them on beds.

The nightdress case is often composed of a smaller sized cloth, edged with lace, and finished off with a large bow of velvet. If the decoration is further carried out, the splasher consists of a long, narrow cloth, and a toilet table cover of another, in the same style, and which are sold for sideboard cloths.

White and gold is popular now, and the furniture is often enamelled to match by the owner of the room.

A somewhat quaint style of work is making flower-pot covers and shaped vases, large and small, in cretonne over cardboard. The cretonne is selected to look as effective and like Oriental china as possible, and the shape is first cut out in pliable cardboard, covered with the cretonne, the edges carefully and neatly laid together, and then joined up by sewing them over.

Some women are very deft-handed in this work, and a pair of so called Oriental jars, standing nearly two feet high, and large in proportion were recently exhibited at an art and industry show. There is a lining of sateen put in before the sections are joined. A tin inside held the flowers and the water.

The Japanese circular hand screens, with bamboo handles, look well painted all white, pale coral-pink, or other colors, with gilded handles and a large rosette of soft silk. In the centre, or towards one side, cut out a circular or oval aperture, and paste in, from the back, a pretty face in colors, out of an illustrated paper or magazine.

Paint all over the back to hide where the picture was gummed on, and paint around the edges of the cutting before putting in the picture, when the front is being done, to prevent any cracking of the paper. Two coats of paint are necessary. The narrow bamboo mounts between the handle and the paper are sometimes first covered with a piece of stout paper, cut to shape, and thus hidden.

NONE INFALLIBLE.—All men, and especially young men, should be modest in conversation. It is very wholesome for a young fellow to associate occasionally with persons who are older than himself. It will not flatter his vanity to learn—as learn he will, sooner or later—that the crude notions which had seemed to him quite a glorious revelation are by no means inspired, or even original, but have been all well sifted, and for the most part decisively rejected, by men of an experience a good deal wider than his own; but it will lead him to form a more lowly estimate of himself and his abilities—and that will do him no harm. "Let us remember, gentlemen," said Dr. Whewell once to the members of his college, "that we are not infallible—not even the youngest of us."

"ALLOW me to congratulate you on your engagement. Tell me how it came about. I thought you intended remaining single." "Yes; certainly. But I met the other day at a ball a young and pretty girl, with whom I got into conversation; and, only think, she confessed that she, too, had decided to remain single. Impossible to imagine greater harmony of disposition. And so we got engaged."

Confidential Correspondents.

WAYBACK.—Tobogganing is a Canadian sport which consists in sliding down a natural slope of snow or artificial slide on a sled without runners, called a toboggan.

EDITH.—It is not etiquette for young ladies to receive presents from gentlemen, other than accepted lovers or relatives, without the permission of their parents.

H. N.—The mimic thunder on the stage is made by two men shaking a long piece of sheet-iron as if it was a carpet. A high wind is raised by a machine, and the pattering of rain by shot falling on thin boards.

R. W.—A person cannot "turn author" as he can turn anything else; we would advise you to adopt another occupation, because judging from your letter we cannot hold out to you much hope in a literary sphere.

LETA.—The first manifest symptoms of softening of the brain are impaired memory, an irritable temper, vacant laughter, giggling and general eccentricity of manner. There is no cure, but medical men can, by judicious treatment, prolong life for many years.

STEPDAUGHTER.—You must obey your stepmother or leave the house. We suspect that it is you who wish to play the tyrant. You are angry at your father's marriage, and are consequently unjust. Yield in all that is lawful, right, and kind; it is your place to do so.

DURHAM.—The Apostolians were a sect of Christians of the second century, who held that it was sinful to possess any goods but in common. There were also Apostolians in the twelfth century, who condemned marriage and rejected baptism; but they were speedily suppressed by the popes of Rome.

T. W.—Window-glass may be made opaque by covering it uniformly with a mixture of sugar of lead and boiled linseed oil. Rub up the ingredients as for oil colors, in sufficient quantity to cover the area of the glass. Apply with a hair brush by a dabbing, jerky motion, until the window has the look of ground glass.

H. C.—The Pythian Games were instituted to commemorate Apollo's victory over the serpent Pytho. They were not unlike the Olympic Games, but consisted chiefly in a musical contention, in which whoever sang the best praises of the god gained the prize of a laurel crown. We have nothing now-a-days like them.

HARRY H.—You need not be so downhearted. "Rome was not built in a day." Go on trying, and be sure to remember all that your master tells you. He certainly seems very patient with you, and if you tell him how different the work is from what you have been used to, we daresay he will make even more excuse for you.

LIZZIE.—We should recommend marriage. With a husband and a home of your own, you would acquire great strength of character and wonderful self-reliance. Nothing braces up the nerves better than having some one to love, some one to care for; in addition, a sense of authority and responsibility inspires the most timid with resolution.

RUTHERFORD.—The Declaration of Independence was written by Thomas Jefferson, in Philadelphia, in 1776. It was first read in public by John Nixon, in the old State House yard, in Philadelphia, on July 8, 1776. On the same day an election was held at the State House for members of the Convention to form a Constitution, and on July 25 the Convention adopted a resolution approving of the Declaration of Independence.

MARTHA.—Chicory is a species of endive, or dandelion. It is not much cultivated in this country, but on the Continent, especially in Germany and Belgium, enormous quantities are raised. When full-grown, the roots are dug up, and after drying, are cut up into small pieces, and roasted, and then ground. Poor families abroad who cannot afford to buy coffee use chicory instead. Carrots and parsnips are frequently prepared in the same way, for the purpose of adulteration.

POE.—The word "Nepenthe" which is so often used by poets, is the name of a plant which, in torrid regions, supplies the traveler with a refreshing beverage. It has an urn or pitcher at the extremity of its leaves, generally filled with pure and limpid water. This is covered with a lid when full; but the water diminishes during the day, and increases in quantity during the night. "Nepenthe" is also the name of a plant which the ancients put into wine to drive dull care away, when the wine itself could not.

KINDER.—A boy should not in our judgment be sent to a regular school until after the second dentition—that is, about the seventh year. "Pour in knowledge gently." Plato, one of the wisest men of ancient Greece, observed that the minds of children were like bottles with very narrow mouths; if you attempted to fill them too rapidly, much knowledge was wasted, and little received; whereas, with a small stream they were easily filled. Those who would make young children prodigies act as wisely as if they would pour a pail of water into a pint measure.

I. S. L.—Nonsuit is a renunciation by the plaintiff of his suit, generally upon the discovery of some error or defect when the matter is so far advanced that the jury is ready at the bar to deliver a verdict. The judge directs a nonsuit if upon the whole case he is of opinion that there is no evidence to justify the jury in returning a verdict for the plaintiff who has to pay all costs of the suit. A decree "nisi" is a decree given "unless" within a certain time cause can be shown by the other side that the decree should be set aside. "Nisi" is Latin for "unless."

A. S. D.—We do not understand whether you are to be an artist in the charade, supposed to be painting Charlotte Corday, or that character herself. If as we assume it is the latter, you only need a plain gown of grey, with white tulle neckerchief passed over the breast and confined by a belt of the gown material at the waist. A stiff white cap of tulle made in the fashion used by French nurses at the present day. The gown is short; white or grey stockings, and slippers with plain ribbon or buckles. This will be sufficiently close to history to pass muster. 2. The author of "Lucile" is Lord Lytton, son of the Bulwer best known by that name. The author of "Lucile" is best known by his pen-name of "Owen Meredith."